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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2022

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CITY EDITION
Vol. 53 • No. 189
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Rain eases but Kerala still on edge as water level rises in dams
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Over four lakh postal staff to strike work against privatisation
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'Dark times,' says Trump as FBI searches his estate in Florida
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Serena hints at retirement, says she wants to focus on personal life
page 12

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NEARBY

Governor honours three freedom fighters

BENGALURU

On the anniversary of the Quit India Movement and the Amrit Mahotsav of India's Independence, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Tuesday visited residences of freedom fighters and felicitated them.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

At 9.84%, Dharwad has the highest TPR in State

BENGALURU

With a gradual rise in COVID-19 cases in the districts other than Bengaluru Urban, the seven-day average Test Positivity Rate (TPR), prior to August 6, had crossed 10% in Dharwad, the highest in Karnataka. It slightly reduced to 9.84% on August 7.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 3

CET document verification from Aug. 16

BENGALURU

Amid the row over CET-2021 repeaters' ranking, KEA will conduct the online document verification to set the counselling process rolling from August 16. KEA officials said they are making preparations to conduct the document online verification and will announce the schedule soon.

KARNATAKA ▸ PAGE 4

OPPORTUNITIES ▸ PAGE 3

Kings and Queens

On a thrilling final day at the 44th Chess Olympiad, Uzbekistan pipped Armenia and a youthful India 2 team to clinch gold in the Open section

OPEN - FINAL POSITIONS

1	**Uzbekistan**
2	Armenia
3	India 2

Nodirbek Abdusattorov (UZB)

WOMEN - FINAL POSITIONS

1	**Ukraine**
2	Georgia
3	India 1

Anna Muzychuk (UKR)

INDIA 2 MEN'S TEAM - BRONZE

Name	Rating*	Points
D. Gukesh	2,867	9/11
Nihal Sarin	2,774	7.5/10
R. Praggnanandhaa	2,767	6.5/9
B. Adhiban	2,594	4/6
Raunak Sadhwani	2,642	5.5/8

* Tournament ELO rating

BEST INDIAN MEN PERFORMERS

Board	Position	Name
1		D. Gukesh
2		Nihal Sarin
3		Arjun Erigaisi*
3		R. Praggnanandhaa

* India 1

INDIA 1 WOMEN'S TEAM - BRONZE

Name	Rating*	Points
Koneru Humpy	2,440	6/10
D. Harika	2,411	3.5/7
R. Vaishali	2,452	7.5/11
Tania Sachdev	2,441	8/11
Bhakti Kulkarni	2,379	4/5

BEST INDIAN WOMEN PERFORMERS

Board	Position	Name
3		R. Vaishali
4		Tania Sachdev
5		Divya Deshmukh#

\# India 2

REPORTS ON PAGE 13

Maharashtra Cabinet expanded

Shinde-led Sena faction, BJP get 9 ministerial berths each

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Ending 40 days of suspense, the first phase of the expansion of the Maharashtra Cabinet was carried out with 18 legislators being sworn in as Ministers in the Eknath Shinde Cabinet on Tuesday.

The swearing-in ceremony at the Raj Bhavan in Mumbai saw adherence to the '50-50 formula', with Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari administering the oath of office to nine MLAs each from the Shinde-led Shiv Sena faction and the BJP.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the new Cabinet on Twitter, stating: "This team is a great blend of administrative experience and the passion to deliver good governance."

While the BJP threw up a couple of surprise names, both allies generally went with experienced leaders while negotiating the demands of region and caste.

A note of discord was struck by BJP State vice-president Chitra Wagh, who opposed the induction of Sena leader Sanjay Rathod. He resigned as Forest Minister in the Maha Vikas Aghadi government in 2021 after he came under pressure from the BJP for his alleged connection with the death of a 23-year-old woman from the nomadic Banjara community. "It's unfortunate that Mr. Rathod, who caused the girl's death, has been made Minister again," she said.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Nitish Kumar dumps BJP for RJD, set to form govt. afresh

He claims support of 164 MLAs from seven parties

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Political history repeated itself in Bihar after five years when Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar did a turnaround on Tuesday and joined hands again with the Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), which he had dumped in 2017 on the issue of corruption. This time, Mr. Kumar parted ways with the BJP and was elected leader of the RJD-led Mahagatbandhan (grand alliance).

He staked claim before Governor Phagu Chouhan to form the next government with the support of 164 MLAs from seven parties. "Will never compromise on the issue of corruption and do service to people of Bihar along with others," Mr. Kumar told mediapersons after returning from the Raj Bhavan.

Asked when he would be taking oath, he said, "It is up to the Governor to give time for the swearing-in ceremony." However, later it was informed that Mr. Kumar will be taking oath as Chief Minister at 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

After several flip-flops, Mr. Kumar this time would be taking oath as Chief Minister for the eighth time since he first came to power in March 2000.

After submitting his resignation, Mr. Kumar told journalists, "In today's [Tuesday's] meeting of all my party MPs, MLAs, Council members and leaders, they expressed their desire to snap ties with the BJP. Immediately I accepted their desire and came to the Raj Bhavan to resign from my post of NDA's Chief Minister".

Rebellion worries

Asked what was the problem with the BJP, Mr. Kumar added, "*bahut din se chal hi rah tha...mere log aapko baad mein bata denge* (It was going on for several days... my people will let you know later)". It is said Mr. Kumar was upset with the BJP since he got evidence of at least six of his party MLAs and two Ministers being approached and lured by someone on behalf of the BJP to split the party.

Earlier, JD(U) national party president Rajeev Ranjan Singh, aka Lalan Singh, told mediapersons that he had got all these audio evidence and "let the time come, will expose them as well".

The buzz in political circles is that former JD(U) president and ex-Union Steel Minister R.C.P. Singh, who recently resigned from the party over alleged charges of corruption, was behind luring the JD(U) legislators and Ministers on behalf of the BJP, to damage Mr. Kumar and his party. Asked about Mr. R.C.P. Singh, Mr. Kumar quipped, "*Maine iss aadmi ko kya se kya bana diya aur...* (I took this man from where to what and...)."

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

MORE REPORTS ▸ PAGE 9

Changing partnerships

Allies again: Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar with Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav. • PTI

March 1990: Nitish Kumar supports Lalu Prasad in his bid to win the Chief Minister's position in a keenly fought battle within Janata Dal

April 1994: Growing differences between Nitish and Lalu resulted in an open revolt. 14 party MPs form a new organisation (later named the Samata Party) created by Nitish. This is the beginning of a 21-year-old feud with Lalu

April 1995: In the Bihar Assembly elections Samata Party won just seven seats. A few months later, Samata Party-BJP alliance is formed

March 2000: Nitish becomes Bihar's CM for the first time, but is forced to quit after 7 days as the NDA lacks enough numbers

November 2005: Nitish becomes CM again with BJP's support

June 2013: Nitish snaps ties with BJP, just a week after Narendra Modi is named as PM candidate

June 2015: Nitish joins hands with Lalu to form the Mahagatbandhan-an anti-BJP alliance

July 2017: Nitish walks out of the Mahagatbandhan after a series of ED/IT raids on premises owned by Lalu's family and friends. He walks back to the BJP, calling it his natural partner

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6 AIR YAKSH CHAUDHARY (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES, SOCIOLOGY TEST, ABHYAAS & PERSONALITY TEST)
7 AIR SAMYAK S JAIN (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES, PERSONALITY TEST, ESSAY TEST)
8 AIR ISHITA RATHI (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)
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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Electricity tariff rises

264 The percentage by which Sri Lanka's state-run electricity monopoly will raise tariffs for people consuming the least while higher users will face a smaller increase. The smallest consumers, currently charged 2.50 rupees a unit, will be charged 8.0 rupees. Bigger consumers, being charged 45 rupees a unit, will have to pay 75 rupees. The Ceylon Electricity Board said the regulator had allowed it to carry out the sharp increases, the first in nine years, to recoup part of its accumulated losses of $616 million. AFP

Chip boost

280 In $ billion, the amount the bipartisan bill will allocate to boost domestic high-tech manufacturing in the U.S. This is part of the Biden administration's push to boost U.S. competitiveness over China. The new law will incentivise investments in the American semiconductor industry in an effort to ease U.S. reliance on overseas supply chains for critical, cutting-edge goods. The White House said Micron is announcing a $40 billion plan to boost domestic manufacturing of memory chips. AP

No women in cabinet

0 The number of women in Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's 41-day-old Ministry. Mr. Shinde expanded his cabinet by inducting 18 Ministers, nine each from his rebel Shiv Sena group and the BJP. The strength of the Maharashtra Ministry has now gone up to 20, less than half the maximum allowed strength of 43. The list doesn't include women. The BJP has 12 women legislators in the State, including one from the Legislative Council. The Shinde group has two women legislators and also the backing of an independent woman MLA. PTI

Technical snags

478 The number of technical snags reported by Indian airlines in the one-year period between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet reported 184, 98 and 77 incidents respectively due to technical snags. Go First, Vistara and AirAsia India reported 50, 40 and 14 incidents due to technical snags in the aforementioned period. These technical snags are reported by the flight crew on receiving an aural or visual warning in the cockpit or when there is an indication of an inoperative or faulty system. PTI

Border roads

6,195 The km of border roads that are currently under construction according to the Minister of State for Defence, Ajay Bhatt. Between 2017-18 and 2021-22, a total of 3,595 km of border roads were constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), the Minister said. The BRO constructs roads on the basis of strategic requirements of a region and priorities fixed by the Indian Army. These roads are also beneficial in the quick mobilisation of troops in cases of exigencies. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

How the maiden flight of ISRO's SSLV went awry

Why did the ISRO prefer a SSLV over the PSLV or GSLV? What was the designated function of the satellites on-board the vehicle?

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

THE GIST

- The SSLV D1/EOS-2 mission was carrying two satellites — the Earth Observation Satellite-2 (EOS-2 and AzadiSAT. However, the mission failed to place the satellites in their required orbits, and the satellites, as they were already detached from the launch vehicle, were lost.
- The EOS-2 offered advanced optical remote sensing operations while the AzadiSAT on the other hand was a collective of 75 tiny payloads integrated by students.
- The malfunctioning of a sensor resulted in placing the satellites in an elliptical orbit, rather than a circular orbit. Satellites that orbit the Earth are mostly placed in circular orbits. One reason is that if the satellite is used for imaging the Earth, it is easier if it has a fixed distance from the Earth.

The story so far: On August 7, ISRO got ready for the first developmental flight of the SSLV-D1/EOS-2 mission. The launch took place from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota. The Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) D1/EOS-2 mission, was carrying two satellites – the Earth Observation Satellite-2 (EOS-2) which weighed about 135 kg and AzadiSAT which weighed about eight kg. The mission aimed to place the EOS-2 in a circular low-Earth orbit at a height of about 350 km above the Equator and inclined at an angle of 37 degrees. The initial part of the story was successful with the launch vehicle operating smoothly. However, the mission failed to place the satellites in their required orbits, and the satellites, as they were already detached from the launch vehicle, were lost.

What was the purpose of the SSLV-D1/EOS-2 mission?

The purpose of this mission was to place the two satellites in circular low-Earth orbits at a height of about 350 km above the Equator. The larger one, the EOS-2 which was designed and developed by ISRO, offered advanced optical remote sensing operations. It would have operated in the infrared region and could have served many purposes, from imaging for climate studies to simply keeping an eye on Earth.

AzadiSAT, on the other hand, was a collective of 75 tiny payloads weighing around 50 grams each, which were integrated by students. It carried tiny experiments which would have measured the ionising radiation in its orbit and also a transponder which worked in the ham radio frequency to enable amateur operators to access it.

Which part of the mission succeeded and where did it fail?

The SSLV was composed of three stages powered by solid fuels and these three performed their function as planned. However, when it came to the stage when the satellites had to be set in orbit, there was a glitch which resulted in the satellites being lost forever. With a degree of openness that is unprecedented in ISRO, it was announced that there was a malfunctioning of a sensor which resulted in placing the satellites in an elliptical orbit, rather than a circular orbit. The ellipse or oval shape of the elliptical orbit is elongated in one direction and compressed in another (the so-called major and minor axes, which are like two radii of the ellipse). The shortest height above the Earth of this oval orbit was only about 76 km.

Why were the satellites lost?

If the closest distance to the Earth is only 76 km, as it happened this time, there is an atmospheric drag experienced by the object at that height. Thereafter, unless adequate thrust is applied to overcome the drag, it will lose height and fall towards the Earth because of gravity and may eventually burn up due to friction.

What went wrong with the launch?

Today rocket technology has progressed to such a stage that even if the course of the rocket is altering from its planned course, there will be sensors that feed back this information to a system. This will immediately trigger a course correction which will restore the trajectory of the rocket. There are many sensors as well as a built-in redundancy. That is, even if one or two sensors fail, there will be others that take over and effect the course correction. In the present case, the announcement was that "failure of a logic to identify a sensor failure and go for a salvage action caused the deviation." This could possibly imply that either redundancy was not built in, which is highly unlikely, or perhaps that it was built in but did not kick off due to a technical glitch.

Why do we need to develop an SSLV when we have successfully used PSLV and GSLV?

The PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) and GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle) are quite powerful and can carry huge loads. To place an Earth Orbiting Satellite in a low Earth orbit, one does not need such power horses. The SSLV can easily carry small-to-medium loads from 10 kg to 500 kg. It is less expensive. The three stages being powered by solid fuel is another advantage. Solid fuel is easier to handle, whereas handling the liquid propellants used in the PSLV and GSLV is more complex.

What is the difference between circular and elliptical orbits?

Mostly objects such as satellites and spacecrafts are put in elliptical orbits only temporarily. They are then either pushed up to circular orbits at a greater height or the acceleration is increased until the trajectory changes from an ellipse to a hyperbola and the spacecraft escapes the gravity of the Earth in order to move further into space – for example, to the Moon or Mars or further away.

Satellites that orbit the Earth are mostly placed in circular orbits. One reason is that if the satellite is used for imaging the Earth, it is easier if it has a fixed distance from the Earth. If the distance keeps changing as in an elliptical orbit, keeping the cameras focussed can become complicated.

Unexpected deviation: ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) during its launch from the Sathish Dhawan Space Centre, in Sriharikota on August 7, 2022. • PTI

EXPLAINER

On guardianship and adoption of minors

What are the multiple laws on adoption and custody of minors? What has the panel recommended with respect to the LGBTQI community?

JAGRITI CHANDRA

The story so far: A Parliamentary panel has recommended conferring equal rights on mothers as guardians under the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (HMGA), 1956 instead of treating them as subordinates to their husband, and has called for joint custody of children during marital disputes. It has also proposed allowing the LGBTQI community to adopt children.

What are the recommendations of the Parliamentary panel on guardianship and child custody?

The department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice tabled its report on August 8, 2022, in both Houses of Parliament on the 'Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws'. In its report the committee has said that there is an "urgent need to amend the HMGA (Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956) and accord equal treatment to both mother and father as natural guardians as the law violated the right to equality and right against discrimination envisaged under Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution."

In cases of marital dispute, the panel says there is a need to relook at child custody which is typically restricted to just one parent where mothers tend to get preference. It says courts should be empowered to grant joint custody to both parents when such a decision is conducive for the welfare of the child, or award sole custody to one parent with visitation rights to the other.

On adoption, the Committee has said that there is a need for a new legislation that harmonises the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956 and that such a law should cover the LGBTQI community as well.

What does the law say on guardianship? How do courts grant child custody?

Indian laws accord superiority to the father in case of guardianship of a minor. Under the religious law of Hindus, or the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, (HMGA) 1956, the natural guardian of a Hindu minor in respect of the minor's person or property "is the father, and after him, the mother: provided the custody of a minor who has not completed the age of five years shall ordinarily be with the mother."

The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937 says that the Shariat or the religious law will apply in case of guardianship according to which the father is the natural guardian, but custody vests with the mother until the son reaches the age of seven and the daughter reaches puberty though the father's right to general supervision and control exists. The concept of Hizanat in Muslim law states that the welfare of the child is above all else. This is the reason why Muslim law gives preference to the mother over the father in matters of custody of children in their tender years.

The Supreme Court's landmark judgment in *Githa Hariharan vs Reserve Bank of India* in 1999 challenged the HMGA for violating the guarantee of equality of sexes under Article 14 of the Constitution of India and the court held that the term "after" should not be taken to mean "after the lifetime of the father ", but rather "in the absence of the father". But the judgment failed to recognise both parents as equal guardians, subordinating a mother's role to that of the father. Though the judgment sets a precedent for courts, it has not led to an amendment to the HMGA.

The panel's proposals on guardianship have been made by the Law Commission of India in its 257th report on "Reforms in Guardianship and Custody Laws in India" in May 2015 as well as its 133rd report in August, 1989 on "Removal of discrimination against women in matters relating to guardianship and custody of minor children and elaboration of the welfare principle"

What about cases of marital disputes?

In cases of marital disputes, some courts such as the Punjab and Haryana High Court and Bombay High Court have framed rules to grant joint custody or shared parenting. But senior lawyer Anil Malhotra says instead of this "patchwork" there is a need to amend the law, including the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890 to introduce concepts such as joint custody.

Can queer and transgender people adopt children in India?

The Adoption Regulations, 2017 is silent on adoption by LGBTQI people and neither bans nor allows them to adopt a child. Its eligibility criteria for prospective adoptive parents says that they should be physically, mentally and emotionally stable, financially capable and should not have any life-threatening medical condition. Single men can only adopt a boy while a woman can adopt a child of any gender. A child can be given for adoption to a couple only if they have been in a marital relationship for at least two years. The HAMA which applies to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists allows men and women to adopt if they are of sound mind and are not minors. Activists say LGBTQI people who seek adoption face institutional discrimination because of stigma. Therefore, the law should be amended to include them as eligible candidates including when they apply as non-single parents such as when they are in civil unions or married for which there is no legal recognition in the country as yet even though the Supreme Court legalised gay sex in 2018.

THE GIST

- A Parliamentary Standing Committee tabled its report on August 8, 2022, in both Houses of Parliament on the 'Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws'. In its report the committee has said that there is an "urgent need to amend the HMGA and accord equal treatment to both mother and father as natural guardians."
- The Supreme Court's landmark judgment in *Githa Hariharan vs Reserve Bank of India* in 1999 challenged the HMGA for violating the guarantee of equality of sexes under Article 14 of the Constitution.
- The Adoption Regulations, 2017 is silent on adoption by LGBTQI people and neither bans nor allows them to adopt a child.

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It was a hectic search for freedom fighters

Authorities able to identify seven of them in Bengaluru

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

After a hectic search of about a week, seven freedom fighters were identified in Bengaluru by Monday night, as the country observed the 80th anniversary of the Quit India Movement on Tuesday and is set to celebrate the 75th Independence Day in a few days.

Though a few of them were known to the district administration as they had been felicitated before, some were identified to be living in Bengaluru.

With the Freedom Fighters' Association now almost defunct, with a large number of members dead, it posed a challenge for the officials. "Two were tracked late on Monday night after ascertaining the pension records and other documents following directions from the Governor's office," an official said.

The seven tracked

Among those identified were Narayanappa of Ulsoor, Srinivas Kamath of Karkala now residing in Koramangala, S.V.T. Gupta of Kadur residing in Yelachenahalli, Shankar Narayan Rao residing in Banashankari, Nagabhushan Rao, a resident of Malleswaram, Narayanappa of Chickballapur now residing in Bhoopasandra, and Satyanarayana of Mavalli.

Mr. Gupta is the president of the Freedom Fighters' Association. They took part in the Quit India Movement, the Mysore Chalo Movement, and other agitations.

Revenue Inspectors and village accountants were employed in the search over the past week after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot directed the government to identify the freedom fighters and felicitate them.

"Some whose contacts were available with the administration had died. Some claimed to be freedom fighters and had approached the Assistant Commissioner's office without proper documents," an official confirmed.

Seniors gone

Things were different a decade or two back, a source said, as veteran freedom fighters, such as H.S. Doreswamy, Chaturvedi, and V.S. Krishna Iyer, among others, were alive.

"During many occasions, they came forward to help in ascertaining an event or even identifying those who participated in the freedom struggle with them."

Another official said though the list of those receiving the freedom fighters' pension is available with the office of the Accountant General of Karnataka, the short notice put them on the job immediately.

"In most cases, we have the postal address since the freedom fighters are sent invitation to participate in the Independence Day and the Republic Day celebrations. However, if they had changed address or have died, the invitation do not come back. Two freedom fighters were tracked from the protocol list. The AG office has the authentic list," the official said.

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot visited the houses of R. Narayanappa, Sankaranarayan Rao, and Nagabhushan Rao in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

Governor Gehlot honours three freedom fighters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

On the anniversary of the Quit India Movement and the Amrit Mahotsav of India's Independence, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Tuesday visited residences of freedom fighters and felicitated them.

Mr. Gehlot visited the residence of H.V. Nagabhushan Rao at Malleswaram in the city and felicitated him with a shawl, Mysore peta, and a bouquet. "I was jailed twice," Mr. Nagabhushan, 102, said. "The first time was in 1942. Then, in 1947, when we started the fight against colonial British rule".

Minister for Higher Education C.N. Ashwath Narayan, also the Malleswaram MLA, accompanied Mr. Gehlot.

The Governor also visited 97-year-old freedom fighter R. Narayanappa's residence at J.P. Nagar. He recalled his teenage days during the freedom struggle. Revenue Minister R. Ashok accompanied the Governor.

In a statement, Mr. Gehlot said no one can appreciate freedom without those who fought for it. "It is our duty to respect and serve all of our freedom fighters and their families for their selfless dedication and sacrifices," he said. Mr. Gehlot then visited Shankaranaraya Rao, a 91-year-old freedom fighter residing in Banashankari III Stage. He took part in the Quit India Movement as well as a rally in 1947.

Generally, the State government extends invitations to freedom fighters requesting them to participate in the Independence Day celebrations at Manekshaw Parade Grounds in Bengaluru.

On the same day, in the evening, the Governor has the tradition of hosting high tea at Raj Bhavan for freedom fighters and other dignitaries of the State.

Site allotment at Karanth layout likely to start by year-end

25,000 sites will be available in the proposed layout

SUCHITH KIDIYOOR
BENGALURU

By the end of the year, the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is likely to issue notification for allotment of sites at the Dr. Shivaram Karanth Layout. The authority has already floated tenders for the formation of the layout, construction of roads, drains, cross-drainage works, storm-water and rain-water harvesting, utilities works, and others.

As per the tender documents, the works will be taken up in a total of nine sectors. According to the assessments made, a total of 25,000 sites will available in the proposed layout. Of these, 12,000 will be made available to the public, around 3,000 are likely to go for revenue site holders as alternative sites, and the remaining developed sites will be given to those who parted with the land for the layout.

A senior official of the BDA said, "The possession of private land is under way by issuing the certificates. Around 2,200 acres are already in possession of the BDA. For the remaining land, documents are being scrutinised. We have already floated tenders for formation of the layouts and providing civic infrastructure. Once we provide basic infrastructure and the demarcation of sites is over, the allotment notification will be issued. The rest of the work will be taken at a later stage". As per plans, the authority is forming the layout on 3,546 acres of land, spread over 17 villages that are coming in the limits of Yeshwanthpur, Hesaraghatta, and Yelahanka hoblis.

The State government recently approved the revised cost for the formation of the layout at ₹5,337 crore. About 45% of the land notified will be reserved for parks, civic amenities, roads, and others. Out of the developed sites, 40% will go to the land owners.

The official said, "In the past, the BDA had allotted thousands of sites at Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout in a phased manner. Layouts formed by the BDA are always in demand. Several areas of the Shivaram Karanth Layout are well developed and have good road networks. The proposed Peripheral Ring Road project will also connect the layout. As the layout is located in northern parts of the city, it is closer to the Kempegowda International Airport compared to other places. Considering these factors, there will be demand".

In the previous allotment of sites, the BDA had invited the wrath of site owners at Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout as the authority failed to provide basic amenities. It has been over six years, but the owners are not in a position to build houses owing to a lack of amenities.

When asked whether the BDA would ensure basic amenities in the new layout, the official said, "In Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout, multiple agencies were involved in building civil infrastructure. Due to lack of coordination among the contractors and other factors, works were not completed on time. To avoid these, in sectors of the Shivaram Karanth Layout, a single agency will be responsible for executing various projects and its completion. This helps in completing the work on time".

- Works will be taken up in a total of nine sectors.
- A total of 25,000 sites will available in the proposed layout, of which 12,000 will be made available to public and around 3,000 are likely to go for revenue site holders as alternative sites.
- The remaining developed sites will be given to the land owners who are parting with the land for formation of the layout.
- The layout will be formed in 3,546 acres of land spread over 17 villages that are coming in the limits of Yeshwanthpur, Hesaraghatta, and Yelahanka hoblis.
- The State government recently approved the revised cost for the formation of the layout at ₹5,337 crore
- 45% of the land notified will be reserved for parks, civic amenities, roads and others.
- Out of the developed sites, 40 % will go to the land owners.

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www.thehindu.com

Text & Context

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) which includes explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (August 10, Wednesday), the following explainers are available:

- **Explained** | What went wrong with the ISRO launch of SSLV? bit.ly/isrsslv
- **Abstract** | Can women be true representatives of the people? bit.ly/womenppl
- **Explained** | On guardianship and adoption of minors bit.ly/minorguards

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- **Watch** | What happens when the Godavari floods? bit.ly/godavriver
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- *You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.*

Vishwa Sanatan Parishad chief booked

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Chamarajpet police have registered a *suo motu* case against the president of the Vishwa Sanatan Parishad charging him with promoting enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion and deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings.

The complaint comes in the wake of the accused S. Bhaskaran's alleged provocative statement to the media on Monday.

Bhaskaran's statement came after the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had announced that the Chamarajpet Idgah maidan belonged to the Revenue Department.

Welcoming the statement, Bhaskaran warned the Wakf Department to remove the Idgah compound, failing which he asked the government to do it at once.

He further said that if the government failed to do it, the Hindutva organisation will carry out the demolition work and raze the structure on December 6.

Civic body to start schools in outer zones

JAYANTH R.
BENGALURU

It has been a decade and a half since the city corporation expanded to include the present outer zones to form the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and the civic body is, for the first time, all set to open its schools in the outer zones.

The civic body runs a total of 164 schools and colleges in the city, all concentrated in the core city zones, that is the erstwhile Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (226 sqkm) areas and not a single institution in the newly added areas, which have seen an exponential growth in population over the last two decades.

BBMP has now proposed to establish 10 education institutions, from nursery to Class XII, under a single roof, in seven Assembly constituencies of the newly added areas.

These institutions will be set up at a cost of ₹77 crore under the Amrit Nagarothana scheme. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had earmarked ₹72 crore for the BBMP to develop the education sector in the city under the scheme.

The State government has given in-principle approval for the project and the DPRs for these schools are yet to be ratified and approved.

Among the 10 schools, four of them will be boarding schools, all of them in Byatarayanapura Assembly constituency, and one non-residential school each in Dasarahalli, K.R. Puram, Bommanahalli, Bengaluru South, Yeshwanthpura, and Rajarajeshwari Nagar Assembly constituencies.

This has been a long-standing demand of MLAs and councillors of these areas.

"In recent years, the number of admissions to our BBMP-run schools has been steadily rising and there has been a demand for more schools. Officers are searching for suitable sites to start these schools in the outer zones. We are planning to start these 10 new schools from the academic year of 2023-24," said Umesh D.S., Assistant Commissioner (Education), BBMP.

Fact sheet

Total BBMP schools and colleges 164	Nursery 91
	Primary schools 16
High schools 33	PU colleges 18
PG centres 2	
Degree colleges 4	

BBMP terminates service of 44 contractual faculty members

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has terminated the services of 44 contractual faculty members at its schools and colleges in the city for not being suitably qualified.

The BBMP has 180 permanent teaching faculty at its 164 educational institutions, while 681 work on contract, hired by a private firm Crystal Infosystem and Services.

Qualifications

Teachers for primary classes must have a DEd. They must have a degree in the particular subject with a BEd for high school and a postgraduate degree in the subject with a BEd for pre-university. A postgraduate degree with NET, KSLET or PhD is a must for teaching graduate and postgraduate students.

Recent review

A recent review of all the contractual faculty at the BBMP's educational institutions revealed many were not suitably qualified to teach at the schools and colleges. The Chief Civic Commissioner directed their termination, sources said.

"New recruitment to fill these posts is under way," said D.S. Umesh, Assistant Commissioner (Education), BBMP.

Man caught stealing phone, files plaint against passengers who beat him up

39-year-old wall painter was taken to the hospital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Upparpet police have registered a case of wrongful restraint and assault against a group of four passengers, who allegedly beat up a 43-year-old wall painter after catching him stealing a phone from one of them.

The complainant, Afroz Bahadur, a resident of HBR Layout, in his complaint, said that he is married and has two children. Afroz said that he was unemployed for many days and had not even paid the rent as he did not have the money. He went around the city in search of a job, but in vain.

While returning home, he saw a passenger slipping his mobile phone in his pocket, and got the idea of stealing the phone to sell it and make some money, Afroz confessed in his complaint.

However, he was caught and was beaten up by a group of passengers. They left Afroz battered and bruised on platform no. 15 only to be rescued by the police, who took him to the hospital. Now, Afroz is being treated for his injuries and he cannot work for a few more days in this situation, a police officer said.

Abandoned bag creates panic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A plastic bag that was abandoned near Richmond Circle created panic for some time until the anti-sabotage team verified and confirmed it as a false alarm. "The bag contained a few pieces of wire and a charger like device with no explosive substance. It looks like some rag-picker might have abandoned the bag," a police officer said .

The police are now checking the CCTV camera footage to find out who had dumped the bag.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public that Original Sale Deed's bearing document numbers:1657/1966-67 and 6283/1967-68, both pertaining to property bearing Sy. No 73, Muthugadahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Bangalore Rural District, Bangalore the brief details of which are as follows:

Sale deed dated: 27/07/1967, Book-1, Volume No-964, Pages-34-36, Document number:1657/1966-67.

Sale deed dated: 15/12/1997, document number: 1657/1996-97, Registered in the office of the Sub Registrar, Yelahanka, Bangalore.

We have filed for missing document complaint in the concerned online portal and have received acknowledgement bearing number: 0288913/2022 dated: 09-08-2022.

Both Original Sale deeds have been lost. All/any person/s are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said Sale Deed's. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within **10 days** from this present.

SUJIT.U, TARAN.V, ADVOCATES
No: G-4, NISH III Apartment,
Ashwath Nagar, Bengaluru-560 094
Contact : 9902029765, 9945878686
Bangalore Date : 09-08-2022

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I **AMRUTA** Chandrakant Patil is legally weddad spouse of No 10490367k PTR Shevale Navnath Annaso presently residing at soundalga (vill/po) chikodi(teh) Belgaum (dist) Karnataka hav changed my Name from Amruta Chandrakant Patil to Amruta Navnath Shevale vide affidavit dt 08/03/2022 sworn before Notary Shivakumar

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **SALOMON** RAJA, R/at LR Bande, Kavalbyrasandra, Bang 32, have lost my original Absolute Sale deed site situated at RK Hegde Nagar, Thanisandra, Bangalore vide document No. KRI-1-04562-2017-18, CD No. KRID604, registered Sub Registrar office, Krishnarajapuram, Bangalore, dated 01-09-2017, if anyone found please contact 8884484845.

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS
MADURAI BENCH
(APPELLATE JURISDICTION)
A.S.(MD)No. 157 of 2013
Sakunthala .....Appellant
-Vs-
1) Jeyanthi,
W/o. Madhu,
Naga Nivas, Swaraj Mark,
Rajeshwari Extn, Bangalore- 560 016.
.... 12th Respondent
The above appeal has been filed by Sakunthala challenging the Judgment and decree passed in O.S.No.83 of 2009 on the file of the 1st Additional District Judge (PCR), Thirichirapalli. The above appeal came up for hearing before the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court on 29.07.2022. The Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court has ordered notice to you to appear before the Hon'ble Madurai Bench of Madras High Court either in person or through an advocate on 17.08.2022. Therefore kindly enter your appearance either in person or through an advocate on 17.08.2022. Failing which the above matter will be decided in an merit and in your absence.
R.BALAKRISHNAN
COUNSEL FOR APPELLANT

THE HINDU
Text & Context

ABSTRACT

Can women be true representatives of the people?

How women legislators are breaking stereotypes and asserting their presence in the Indian Parliament

REBECCA ROSE VARGHESE

Hussain, Sadia, 'Performance of Women in Parliament: A Quantitative Study of Questions by Women Members in Lok Sabha (1999-2019)', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol 57, Issue No. 31, July 30, 2022

THE GIST

- Sadia Hussain's article, 'Performance of Women in Parliament: A Quantitative Study of Questions by Women Members in Lok Sabha (1999-2019)' draws attention to women's performance in the Lok Sabha through a quantitative analysis of the questions posed by women leaders on the floor.
- With more women representatives in Parliament, it is imperative to look at their performance. Women's performance during the Question Hour session becomes relevant as it is a space where legislators act free from party regulation. It becomes imperative to analyse whether descriptive representation transforms into substantive representation.
- It was found that contrary to general belief, women representatives asked more questions on health and family welfare, human resource development, home affairs, finance, agriculture and railways than women's issues.

Literature on the workings of Parliament and its performance has been scarce. Very few academic papers have covered critical reviews of the institution. Even less are research works on women's performance in leadership positions or how they participate and represent people in political spaces. Sadia Hussain's article, 'Performance of Women in Parliament: A Quantitative Study of Questions by Women Members in Lok Sabha (1999-2019)' draws attention to women's performance in the Lok Sabha through a quantitative analysis of the questions posed by women leaders on the floor. It contests claims that women members act as silent dolls or 'gungi gudiyas' during the Question Hour in Parliament and that they act as mere token representation in political spheres.

Women in politics

The article contextualises women's position in Indian electoral politics. Nivedita Menon's work on feminist theory and politics in India asserts how India has not had a single women's movement that challenged patriarchal and gender norms in the last two decades. Women have had to use alternate methods to come to power. Education and wealth have aided women in political participation. Studies suggest that more women have started to organise themselves into economic groups, and financial freedom has pushed them to be more politically active. The decreased gap in voter turnout between men and women is a positive sign toward gender inclusivity in the political sphere. The 2019 general election was a historic moment for women's politics, as it saw 78 women elected to the lower house of Parliament for the first time since independence where only 22 women were present in the 543-member Lok Sabha. But the author explains that this number is still not representative of the actual proportion of women in the country.

Access to power versus participation

With more women representatives in Parliament, it is imperative to look at their performance. Women's performance during the Question Hour session becomes relevant as it is a space where legislators act free from party regulation. Substantive representation or acting in the interest of those represented defines the quality of a leader. It becomes imperative to analyse whether descriptive representation transforms into substantive representation.

Do women members only represent women, or do they represent the general public that voted them into positions of power? Do they ask questions only about "softer issues" such as women and child development, health, and sanitation, shying away from discussions on national security, finance, agriculture, and railways?

On the one hand women legislators bear the burden to represent women's issues more and on the other they are concerned in representing the issues pertaining to the general public at large

The author analyses these research questions through the study of parliamentary sessions. The questions asked during the Question Hour of Parliamentary sessions between the years 1999 to 2019 were specifically chosen as they involved four general elections with governments completing their full five-year terms with two different ruling coalitions. As part of the evaluation, the number of questions raised by representatives, the Ministries under which they fell, and the content of questions including terms like 'women', 'girls', 'rape', 'crimes against women' and 'maternal', were collected and categorised.

Breaking stereotypes

The study reveals how descriptive representation transforms into substantive representation. It goes against the popular notion that women members only touch upon softer issues or that they are silent spectators in Parliament.

Though men asked more questions and participated in more debates than women, there has been a substantial increase in the number of questions women asked. Moreover, contrary to general belief, women representatives asked more questions on health and family welfare, human resource development, home affairs, finance, agriculture and railways than women's issues. Male legislators asked more questions on issues concerning women than their female counterparts. These are very welcoming signs as the representatives were seen not to be held back by gender stereotypes.

Intersectionality of identities became an important factor in the questioning capacity of representatives. Members from marginal States, irrespective of gender asked fewer questions. Women from the BJP, irrespective of whether they were in power or representing the Opposition, asked the most number of questions. Party affiliations, education, regional background, ethnicity, caste and the age of women members played a role in the number and content of questions asked in the lower house. Thus, the author explains the danger of considering women as a homogenous group and how identities intersect and influence the political representation of women.

The paper studies the friction between the burden women bear to represent women's issues more and on the other hand, being concerned in representing the issues pertaining to the general public at large. While women are expected to bring a feminine quality into the public political domain, they are breaking stereotypes by simply behaving like their male counterparts.

Analysing these debates on gender and politics, using the performance framework, one concludes that the problem of under-representation of women is only superficial.

What lies underneath is the problem of structural inequality, wherein women are marginalised at different levels. Through examples of Latin American Parliaments, the author explains how proportional representation will lead to a better representation of women's interests.

Moreover, representation becomes a phenomenon that cannot be isolated from society. Social, cultural, economic, religious and political factors affect the process.

The increased political participation is a positive sign toward gender inclusivity and equality in the political sphere. But it has a long way to go, considering the socio-economic and cultural conditions that still socialise women into being averse to politics, hindering them from pursuing politics as a career.

THE DAILY QUIZ

On August 10, 1793, the Louvre Museum opened in Paris and later became the most-visited museum in the world. Here's a quiz on popular museums

1 The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum was organised by its former 'inhabitants'. When it opened in 1947, visitors could view the burning pits and crematoriums used to murder hundreds of thousands of people. The museum is dedicated to preserving the memory of the victims of which event?

2 In Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*, which museum of sculptures is described as follows: 'speech is all that is wanting to make them human'?

3 Identify this museum that takes the name of a noble Hyderabad family under the Nizams, who ruled from 1720 to 1948. Originally a private art collection of this family, the Hyderabad-based museum was endowed to the nation in 1949.

4 The Met Gala is an annual fundraising gala held for the benefit of the fashion institute of a New York-based museum. Identify the museum.

5 This museum is the largest monument in the world dedicated to a royal. A large marble building in Kolkata, it was built in memory of an Empress of India who ruled from 1876 to 1901. Name the museum.

6 The Natural History Museum in London hosts one of the largest cut diamonds in the world. Name the diamond that is said to have been a part of the Mughal Peacock Throne.

7 This museum is well-known for its spiral design that resembles a nautilus shell. Its gallery extends up from ground level in a long, continuous spiral along the outer edges of the building to end just under the ceiling skylight. Name this contemporary art museum based in New York.

Name this Greek sculpture that was added to the Louvre's collection during the reign of Louis XVIII.

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The year in which Singapore got independence. **Ans: 1965, from Malaysia**
2. Singapore's four official languages. **Ans: English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil**
3. The name of the Singapore international airport. **Ans: Changi International Airport**
4. The lasting contribution of Alec Fraser-Brunner to the country's identity. **Ans: He designed the 'Merlion', the official mascot of Singapore**
5. The first Prime Minister of Singapore. **Ans: Lee Kuan Yew**
6. The 2.5 km road in Singapore that is a world-famous tourist attraction. **Ans: Orchard Road**
7. Designed by Pierre Balmain and made of traditionally Asian batik, this has become synonymous with the 'Singapore Girl'. **Ans: Sarong kebaya**
8. Singapore's first-ever Olympics gold medallist. **Ans: Joseph Schooling**
Visual: This statesman is the founder of the first British colony in Singapore in 1819. **Ans: Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles**

Early Birds: Sagar Solanki| Falguni Chaturvedi| Sachin Tayal

Compiled by: Ranjani Srinivasan

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Wish you a Happy New Year, sir."

"Thank you. Wish you the same."

"Sir, what's the difference between 'careful' and 'cautious'?"

"When you are asked to drive carefully, you are warned of some difficulty or difficulties ahead. When you are asked to drive cautiously, you are warned of extraordinary difficulties and dangers. When you are cautious, you take care not to do something. You can be careful either in doing or abstaining from doing something. A careful writer is a writer who seeks to write well. A careful speaker is one who seeks to speak well.

'You must be careful in your dealings with him' means you must behave with him in such a way that you don't get into any trouble. When you are asked to be cautious in your dealings with another, you are asked to be very, very careful in your dealings with the person."

"Sir, what's the meaning of 'He bearded the boss in his office'?"

"When someone who is generally afraid of the boss picks up courage and challenges him in his office, you say 'He bearded the boss in his office'.

He still hasn't made up his mind whether he should beard the editor in his office.

The idiom is 'to beard the lion in his den'. 'Lion' and 'den' can be changed into appropriate nouns to suit the context."

"What's the difference between 'surprise' and 'astonish', sir?"

"When you are caught unawares, you are surprised. You are surprised when something unexpected happens.

I was surprised at his failure.

I was surprised when I heard that he had resigned his job.

I was surprised when he turned up.

'Astonish' is from Latin *ex* plus *tonare* meaning 'to thunder'. You are thunderstruck when you are astonished. 'Astonish' is much stronger than 'surprise'. We are taken by surprise but are struck with astonishment.

When a woman saw her husband making love to another woman, she said in anger. "I am surprised". The husband said, "Not so. I am the one who is really surprised. You are astonished". Well, I hope you understand the difference. But you don't have to enact the little scene every time you want to make the distinction clear."

"Oh. no sir. I can't afford to. Thank you sir. Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

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"Enrolling in FIITJEE's Two Year Classroom Program eventually turned out to be a life changing decision for me"

my name is saumitra garg. I got enrolled for FIITJEE's two year classroom programme in 2020 which eventually turned out to be a life-changing decision for me. the teaching methodology, guidance of expert faculty, doubt clearing sessions and regular tests helped me to develop the required exam attempting skills, conceptual clarity and the right exam temperament. Even in pandemic, FIITJEE's online classes began and went on with the same regularity and enthusiasm with which they started, making them no less effective than offline classes. the All India test series posed challenging questions.

All this helped me to achieve the dream score of 300/300 and All India Rank-1 in JEE (main) 2022.

At JEE (Advanced) is main goal, I have been completely focussing on FIITJEE AITS for precise performance evaluation and peer-level standing. Additionally, covering CIMP, RTPF and Archive under the mentorship of FIITJEE faculty helped a lot.

saumitra garg

"I joined FIITJEE in Class 6 in Classroom Program and since then my journey has been exciting & fulfilling"

All India Rank **3**

Parth Bhardwaj
Student of FIITJEE's LITTLE Genie (VI)
+ UDAYA - Two Year (VII-VIII)
+ Four Year Classroom Program (IX-XII)

I, Parth Bhardwaj, proud to say that I made the best decision of my life by joining FIITJEE. Many other students had joined other coaching institutes and they are regretting now.

I joined FIITJEE in class 6 in the little genie classroom program and since then my journey has been nothing short of exciting, empowering and fulfilling. In these years, I got the best of everything: faculty, study material, environment test series and guidance.

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Parth

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Girl's death brings to fore crumbling living conditions

ANIL KUMAR SASTRY
MANGALURU

The washing away of an eight year-old class II student Sannidhi in Kalthodu village of Udupi district on Monday has yet again brought to fore the highly unsafe conditions the residents of Coastal and Malenadu Karnataka live in, particularly during the monsoon, in remote villages.

Sannidhi, a student of Government Higher Primary School in Chapparike, slipped from the hands of a midday meal worker while crossing a swollen stream on her way back home and was swept away in the strong currents on Monday at Beejamakki. While an older member of her family would generally accompany her to and from the school, she was unfortunately alone that evening, according to Byndoor Tahsildar Kiran Gowraiah.

Sannidhi is not the lone child to be snatched by monsoon fury – last year, a school girl was swept away after falling from a footbridge into a rivulet near Padubidri in Udupi district. Similar cases were reported in the previous years too from these regions, where water bodies remain full to the brim for at least four months a year and connectivity in hinterlands remains severely hampered.

Despite big strides in public infrastructure, hundreds of villages in Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, Kodagu, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts have remained poorly connected. While thousands of water bodies flowing through these districts bring life to lakhs of people in the State, they become death traps for the local residents, particularly children.

It is a norm for parents or other elders in the family to accompany small children to schools to ensure their safe commute, including crossing/passing through water bodies and safety from wild animals.

With the inability of the government to build at least concrete footbridges, people continue to use makeshift footbridges made of tree logs, bamboo poles or arecanut tree-logs, particularly during the Monsoon.

Karnataka Coastal Development Authority had taken up footbridge construction in coastal districts in a big way four years ago and has so far built about 80 such structures, said Authority Chairperson Mattar Rathnakar Hegde. This year, too, about 30 proposals have been made, of which at least 10 would be immediately built.

He would visit Kalthodu on August 10 and take stock of the situation, Mr. Hegde told *The Hindu*.

Byndoor MLA B.M. Sukumara Shetty on Monday said that work on a concrete footbridge near Beejamakki, where the girl was swept away, could not be commenced this year following early rains in May.

At 9.84%, Dharwad has the highest TPR in State

Positivity rate higher than State average in nine districts

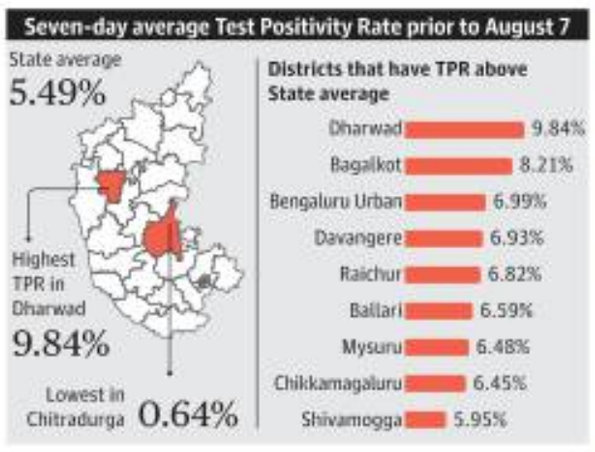
AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

With a gradual rise in COVID-19 cases in the districts other than Bengaluru Urban, the seven-day average Test Positivity Rate (TPR) – prior to August 6 – had crossed 10% in Dharwad, the highest in Karnataka. It slightly reduced to 9.84% on August 7. Dharwad is followed by Bagalkot with a seven-day average TPR of 8.21%. Bengaluru Urban, which had the second highest seven-day average TPR till August 5, is now behind Bagalkot at 6.99%.

Overall, nine districts have a TPR that is higher than the State average of 5.49%, according to data from the State war room as of August 7.

Apart from Dharwad, Bagalkot and Bengaluru Urban, Davangere, Raichur, Ballari, Mysuru, Chikkamagaluru and Shivamogga have a TPR higher than the State average.

With less than 1%, Chitradurga, Yadgir and Vijayapura have the lowest seven-day average TPR in the State. Karnataka has recorded nearly a two-fold rise in weekly COVID cases since the third week of July. At least 24 districts have recorded nearly a significant rise in the last fortnight.



Karnataka has, in fact, contributed to 10.1% of India's weekly new cases in week ending August 5. Concerned over the increasing cases, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan had on August 5 written to the State reminding it of the need for heightened action to contain the spread of cases.

Daily testing in the State, which was below 20,000 till July 18, has been ramped up following the State COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) recommendation. Nearly 33,000 tests are conducted daily now, except on Sundays.

However, seven districts (Chikkamagaluru, Bagalkot, Koppal, Ramanagara, Haveri, Kalaburgi and Bengaluru Rural) have reported a decline in the number of total tests conducted in week ending August 4 as compared to week ending July 28, according to the Centre's letter.

Active cases that had crossed 10,000 on July 30 are now hovering around 12,000. Nearly 70% of the total active cases are from Bengaluru Urban. As of Monday, among districts other than Bengaluru, Mysuru has the highest number of active cases at 427 followed by 410 in Belagavi. The number of hospital admissions too have increased slightly. Till August 7, as many as 221 people were hospitalised of which 27 patients had occupied ICU beds. Only two are on ventilators. Of the 221, only 53 are from Bengaluru.

Following Karnataka COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) recommendation, nearly 33,000 tests are conducted daily now, except on Sundays. • FILE PHOTO

TAC chairman M.K. Sudarshan said the rise in districts is a usual pattern observed during every surge. "This time, it has been a bit slow. Bengaluru Urban has sustained the pattern of reporting the highest caseload in the State for over three months and is seeing a decline now," Dr. Sudharshan said.

Asserting that the current surge cannot be called a wave, the TAC chairman said this is because there is no emergence of any new variant of concern. "This surge is driven by sub-lineages of Omicron. Moreover, the number of hospitalisations are very low. Hence, the situation is not alarming as of now," he said.

C.N. Manjunath, member of the State's Clinical Experts Committee, said most of those who are getting infected are either asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic.

"COVID has now become similar to viral fever that settles within three to five days. If we further ramp up testing, the number of cases will only go up," he said.

Man washed away in river in Kalaburagi

KARNATAKA BUREAU
KALABURAGI/HASSAN

A man was washed away in Kagina river near Madbul in Kalaburagi district. He has been identified as Sheik Ahammad Sheik Mehabub from Hyderabad.

As per sources in the Fire and Emergency Services Department, the 42-year-old man had, along with his family, come to his relatives place in Chittapur for Muharram. On Monday, he went to the river near Madbul for fishing and slipped and fell into the overflowing river. The National Disaster Response Force and the local Fire and Emergency Services personnel continued search operations on Tuesday.

Timings
BENGALURU

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 10	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:43
RISE 17:25	SET 03:57
THURSDAY, AUG. 11	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:43
RISE 18:23	SET 05:04
FRIDAY, AUG. 12	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:42
RISE 19:16	SET 06:09

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	24
Mysuru	26	20
Bengaluru	25	20

Bengaluru Today
26°C A comfortable but humid weather to prevail during the day. Night will be pleasant. Few spells of rain and thundershower to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C The weather will remain comfortable but humid. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain or thundershower may occur.

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Power shutdown

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

There will be disruption in power supply on Wednesday between 10 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. and the areas affected will be: Jayamahal extension, Nandi Durga Road, Jayamahal Road, Munireddypalya, J.C. Nagar, Marappa Garden, and Chinnappa Garden.

THE HINDU
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Forms can be downloaded from the website which should be filled and submitted along with the applicable fees. Corrigendum, if any, will be published only in the website mentioned above.
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Territory Manager Bangalore : 9987444998
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Applications are invited for regular position of **Assistant Professor in the Engineering & Technology disciplines of Institute.** Eligible candidates are required to submit the application in prescribed proforma available on Institute website along with required processing fee and testimonials on or before **04:00 p.m. on 30.09.2022** to the office of the **Director, MITS Gwalior.** Please visit the Institute website www.mitsgwalior.in for application proforma and detailed information. **(Dr. R.K. Pandit) Director**

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CET document verification process to begin from Aug. 16

KEA officials say they are making preparations and will announce schedule soon

JAYANTH R.
BENGALURU

Amidst the row over CET-2021 repeaters' ranking, the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) will conduct the document verification online to set the counselling process rolling from August 16. KEA officials said they are making preparations to conduct the document verification online and will announce the schedule soon.

The High Court of Karnataka has adjourned the CET-2021 repeaters plea till August 18, but said that the process of document verification would be subject to orders of the court, while maintaining that the document verification process would be without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the students who have knocked on the doors of the court on the issue of ranking.

Ramya S., Executive Director, KEA, told *The Hindu*, "The court has not placed any restrictions on the document verification. This year, we are conducting document verification online and we are preparing for this. From August 16, the document verification will be started."

The High Court has said that the process of document verification will be subject to orders of the court. • FILE PHOTO

This year, COMED-K is conducting the counselling for COMED-K UGET-2022 rank holders from August 22 for its 60% of engineering seats.

COMED-K has already published the tentative schedule of the first round of counselling and the last date for registration for online counselling and online upload of documents is August 12. While filling the form for eligible candidates whose document is successfully verified is from August 22 to 24, the mock allotment and editing of choice filling form is August 26. The results of seat allotment will be announced between August 30 to September 1. The last date for students to confirm seat is September 1.

S. Kumar, Executive Secretary, COMEDK, said, "KEA is serving students of Karnataka, but we have an all-India character. We successfully conducted the COMEDK UGET-2022 pan India examination for our part of 60% engineering seats of Karnataka Un-aided Private Engineering Colleges Association (KUPECA). We do not touch the 40% of government quota seats. We will follow the KEA rules and regulations for 40% government quota seats."

"Due to the delay in COMEDK counselling ever year, we are getting losses of minimum 3,000 to 4,000 students from the other States. To avoid this, we are conducting counselling for our part of engineering seats earlier than KEA. We need not to wait for the KEA counselling. In case if any students have cancel the admission from the KUPECA colleges and then go to CET counselling and get the seat at there, we will refund the complete fee," Dr. Kumar told.

AIDSO's demand

AIDSO, the student organisation, has demanded that the KEA and COMEDK should postpone the CET-2022 and UGET-2022 counselling until the High Court order.

Ajay Kamath, State secretary of AIDSO, said, "The future of thousands of aspiring CET repeater students is in dark due to the problem created by the Karnataka Examination Authority. While the matter is still subjudice, preparations have started to commence the counselling process."

AIDSO demanded that only after completion of CET counselling, COMED-K process should be initiated.

Cong. takes potshots at Bommai on 'change of CM' rumours

Ex-MLA had said BJP was considering leadership change

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A day after former Bharatiya Janata Party MLA B. Suresh Gowda claimed that the party's top leadership was considering replacing Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, the Congress in a series of tweets took jibes at the government and said that the State appears set to "see a third Chief Minister" after Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Bengaluru last week.

On Monday, Mr. Gowda had said, "The Chief Minister might get replaced before Independence Day. There have been talks in the party."

Mr. Gowda is a former Tumakuru Rural MLA.

Party tweets

Taking a dig at Mr. Bommai, the Opposition Congress on Tuesday tweeted, "40% government is likely to see a third Chief Minister." In another tweet, the party said that "the puppet Chief Minister Bommai is on his way out." The Ministers' silence after Mr. Shah's visit is proof for the possible change of guard in the government, the Congress alleged.

In a series of tweets, the Congress lashed out at the BJP government for its indulgence in various scams such as recruitment of police sub-inspectors, drug peddling, fake currency, and bitcoin. The Bommai government extended support to all those involved in the scams, the Congress claimed.

Basavaraj Bommai

The Bommai-led government, which has not been able to conduct its first anniversary "Janotsva", will soon see its end, the Congress said.

Several BJP leaders and senior Ministers responded to these tweets and dismissed speculations on leadership change.

Revenue Minister R. Ashok and Power Minister Sunil Kumar said that the party high command had made it clear that the next election will be fought under Mr. Bommai's leadership and there was no ground for Congress's speculation. They suggested that Congress set its own divided house in order before commenting on the ruling party.

Sudhakar responds

Taking exception to the Congress's jibes, Health Minister B. Sudhakar remarked that the party was "dreaming of a change in guard in the State."

"The BJP government is safe and stable under the efficient leadership of Mr. Bommai," Dr. Sudhakar remarked.

Launching a counter attack on the Congress, he said it will be known soon "who would make whom to get down from the double-door bus of the State Congress", in a reference to the perceived one upmanship between the top Congress leaders Siddaramaiah and D.K. Shivakumar for the Chief Ministerial post.

Only Congress had the precedence of changing the Chief Minister on the basis of chits sent by their Delhi bosses, he remarked.

Dr. Sudhakar said during the Congress regime, the term CM had become synonymous with "Chit Minister" as they were being changed on the basis of "chits sent by Delhi bosses."

'Prevention of Corruption Act applicable to KMF staff'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Stating that an employee of the Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (KMF) comes under the definition of 'public servant' of the Prevention

FROM THE COURT

of Corruption (PC) Act, 1988, the High Court of Karnataka has declined to quash a disproportionate assets case registered against a general manager of KMF.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order while rejecting the petition filed by V. Krishnareddy, who was working as general manager (Nandini Milk Products) when the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) registered case against him in November 2021 under the PC Act.

It was contended on behalf of the petitioner that PC Act is not applicable to him as he is 'not a public servant' as he is employed in KMF, a cooperative society.

However, the court said, "The petitioner being a general manager of Nandini Milk Products, which is a unit of KMF, undoubtedly performs public duty and the government's obligations of such public duty was transferred to the federation when it was created. Therefore, the inescapable conclusion would be that the petitioner would be a public servant within the meaning of Section 2(c) of the Act." While citing application of PC Act as per apex court's interpretation, the High Court pointed out that if there is even sprinkling aid falling upon the cooperative society it would be sufficient to bring an employee of that society within the definition of 'public servant'.

The ACB had registered the case against the petitioner after it was found in the source report that the petitioner had possessed assets, which is 107.7% disproportionate to his known sources of income.

Fee refund: Government to issue notices soon

UGC recently issued guidelines on repaying fees

We welcome the UGC's decision and shortly will issue the notice to all universities and higher educational institutions. If there is any violations of UGC order, legal action will be initiated.

C.N. ASHWATH NARAYAN
Minister for Higher Education

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The State government has assured that it would issue notices to all universities and higher educational institutions on the recent order of University Grants Commission to refund the entire fee collected if an admission is cancelled before October 31 of the academic year.

On July 12, 2022, the commission had asked higher education institutions to fix the last date of their undergraduate admission process after declaration of the CBSE class XII results, so as to provide sufficient time for all students for admission. Furthermore, several entrance examinations have been delayed, because of which admissions may continue up to October, 2022.

Cancellation

On cancellation or withdrawal of admissions up to December 31, the entire fee collected from a student should be refunded in full after deducting not more than ₹1000 as a processing fee.

"We welcome the UGC's decision and shortly will issue the notice to all universities and higher educational institutions in this regard. Since two years, due to the pandemic, students and parents are facing financial hardships. If there is any violations of UGC order, legal action will be initiated," warned C.N. Ashwath Narayan, Minister for Higher Education.

In the academic year of 2021-22, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UGC had stipulated the provision for refund of fees on account of all cancellations of admissions or migration of students.

UGC had received several references from students stating that they did not use the hostel and mess services during lockdown, and yet, the institutions had not refunded the mess charges and hostel.

BJP govt. should be ashamed for selling national flags: Shivakumar

'The party is insulting the tricolour and freedom fighters'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday criticised the ruling BJP and said the government should be ashamed for selling national flags while the Congress has decided to distribute 1.5 lakh national flags, caps and T-shirts, for free.

Speaking to reporters after the celebration of the Quit India Movement's 80th anniversary at the party office here, he said the Chief Minister should ensure that all citizens are distributed national flags for free. "National flag is a symbol of a country's self-respect, unity and honour. It is not a commodity for sale. The ruling party is insulting the national tricolour and freedom fighters," he said.

National flag is a symbol of a country's self-respect, unity and honour. It is not a commodity for sale.

D.K. SHIVAKUMAR
KPCC president

He urged all partymen to bring their family members and friends to participate in the Freedom March organised by the State Congress on August 15.

"It is a great opportunity for Congressmen as we got the privilege of celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav," he said.

Proud winners

CWG-2022 silver medalist in 3,000-m steeplechase Avinash Sable, gold medalist in triple jump Eldhose Paul, and silver medalist in triple jump Abdulla Aboobacker, along with Sports Authority of India south regional director Ritu Pathik, at the Sri Balamuri Ganapati temple on SAI campus, during a welcome ceremony, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Karnataka guest house at Mantralayam gets a ₹4-crore facelift to benefit pilgrims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Minister for Muzrai and Waqk Shashikala Jolle on Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed Karnataka guest house at Raghavendra Mutt in Mantralayam, Andhra Pradesh, built at the cost of ₹4 crore for the benefit of pilgrims visiting from the State.

The building has 50 rooms, including 40 deluxe and 10 VIP rooms. The department has provided ₹54 lakh towards purchase of furniture in 50 rooms, said the Minister after inaugurating the building.

The government has been constructing a mega Karnataka Bhavan building at the cost of ₹232 crore at Tirumala in Tirupati and the work on the building was moving at a fast pace, she said. Noting that the BJP government has been giving prominence on providing accommodation facilities at various religious places, she said the government had released ₹5 crore towards construction of a guest house at Sabarimala in Kerala, ₹3 crore for a guest house at Pandharapur in Maharashtra, and ₹4 crore for renovation of an old guest house at Mantralayam. A sum of ₹3 crore each had been sanctioned for various development works at Renuka Yellamma temple at Savadatti in Belagavi, Sri Dattatreya Swamy Temple at Gangapur in Kalaburagi, Sri Siddhagiri Mutt in Kolhapur in Maharashtra, Sri Siddalingeshwara Temple at Yediyur in Kunigal in Tumakuru, Sri Sharadamba temple at Sringeri in Chikmagalur, and Sri Mylara Lingeshwara Swamy temple at Mailara in Ballari district, she said.

The newly constructed Karnataka guesthouse at Mantralayam in Andhra Pradesh.

At Ayodhya

Ms. Jolle said the government has been in touch with the Yogi Adityanath-led government of Uttar Pradesh for construction of a guest house at Ayodhya where the Ram Temple was being built.

Progressive farmer B.V. Rama Reddy dead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Progressive farmer B.V. Rama Reddy, who played a key role in strengthening the CPI(M) in Bagepalli, died on Monday.

The 82-year-old leader, who had followers cutting across party lines, had taken to farming in his native village of Booragamadagu village at Bagepalli taluk in Chickballapur district after obtaining a Masters Degree in Economics from the University of Mysuru in 1960s.

Coming from a wealthy farming family, he used his land for demonstrating various techniques of advanced and scientific farming. He had set up a seed production unit in the late 60s that had caught the attention of not just farmers, but also farm scientists.

He was known for helping a large number of students from difficult background to pursue their studies by offering them accommodation and food at his house.

A keen participant in panchayat raj institutions since early 80s, he had also served as ZP member and won national award for his role in water conservation. He had also held various grassroot level posts.

An ardent reader of *The Hindu*, he was known for creating awareness among farmers and farm labourers about the articles published in the newspaper.

His last rites were performed at his native village on Tuesday.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

Dr. Mani Modale Mani

Dr Mani Modale Mani, renowned Plastic Surgeon, Burn Specialist and Professor Emeritus of Surgery at the University of Kansas, passed away in Kansas City, USA on 6th August 2022. He was 85.

Dr Mani was preceded in death by his wife Rebekah Mani (nee Kuruvilla) in 2020. He leaves behind three children, Mani Mani, Kuruvilla Mani and Rachel Finn, six grandchildren and one great grandson.

In Memory of your loved ones

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DEATH

Dr. M. Thiagarajan
Retd. Prof. & HOD LPM,
Madras Veterinary College
Passed away on 09.08.2022
Deeply mourned by
Mrs. Jeya Thiagarajan
Children & Grandchildren
98411-13491 / 98451-63029 / 80560-37229

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY

SRI. G. SEGARAN
(09-08-1954 - 10-08-2016)
Founder / Proprietor of NEHRU STORES
Fondly Remembered by
SMT. S. MALLIKA & FAMILY

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'Mullaperiyar dam is safe; flood regulation done as per rule curve'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday wrote to his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan, reassuring him and the people of the neighbouring State that the Mullaperiyar dam was safe, and flood regulation was being done as per the rule curve and gate operation schedule approved by the Central Water Commission in February 2021.

Mr. Stalin said, "Our dam management team is very focused on the precautionary measures to be taken on time for ensuring the safety of the people residing downstream of the Mullaperiyar dam. All the officers in charge of the dam have been adequately instructed to take all necessary measures and maintain continuous communication with the officers at your end."

Last Friday, Mr. Vijayan sought Mr. Stalin's urgent intervention to regulate the discharge to keep the water level within the safety threshold.

In his reply, Mr. Stalin said the inflows received in the first week of August were moderate, and the rainfall in the catchments was also lesser than the downpour downstream of the dam.

"Even then, the field officers were instructed to divert waters to the Vaigai basin to the maximum extent possible, and to scrupulously follow the rule levels and gate operation schedule, as per the flood regulation protocol," he said.

Rain eases, but Kerala on edge

Shutters of most dams raised as heavy inflow from catchment areas continues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The heavy rain that left a trail of destruction across Kerala last week appeared to have tapered off on Tuesday, but with more than 30 brimming dams spewing water through spillway shutters, residents in the downstream areas remained on high alert.

A view of the Kurumpanmoozhy causeway across the Pampa, which has been taken over by the flood waters. • LEJU KAMAL

The rising water level in reservoirs forced authorities to turn their attention to dam management. The shutters of most dams were raised further as the heavy inflow from catchment areas continued.

Residents along the banks of rivers in Palakkad, Thrissur, Wayanad, Pathanamthitta, Idukki and Ernakulam were put on high alert.

All the five shutters of the Cheruthoni dam of the Idukki reservoir and 13 shutters of the Mullaperiyar dam were opened. Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine reviewed the situation in the downstream areas of Mullaperiyar dam.

Two shutters of the Pamba dam and four gates of the Kakki-Anathodu reservoirs were raised to increase the release of water. One more shutter of the Banasura Sagar dam in Wayanad was opened on Tuesday.

The low-lying regions along the Periyar river have been placed on high alert after four shutters of the Edamalayar dam were opened by Tuesday evening. The influx of water from the Bhoothathankettu barrage and Chruthoni dam in Idukki was being closely monitored. The Ernakulam district administration opened relief camps for the residents in the low-lying areas of Eloor.

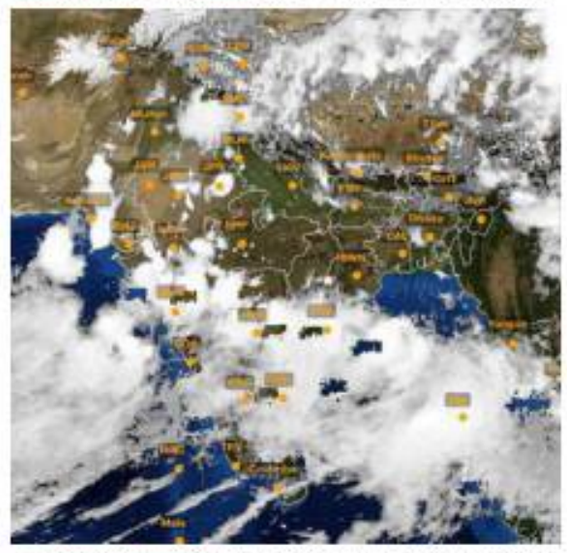
In Palakkad, the sluice gates of the Malampuzha, Kanhirapuzha, Mangalam, Pothundi, Chulliyar and Siruvani dams and the Moolathara regulator were opened to release water.

The Aliyar dam in Tamil Nadu also continued to discharge water into the Bharathapuzha river and its tributaries.

Meanwhile, the weather office has forecast widespread rain across Kerala with isolated heavy rainfall till August 11 under the influence of a depression over coastal Odisha and an offshore trough from Gujarat to the Kerala coast.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY


TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Saurashtra & Kutch, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Bihar, Jharkhand, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.4	34.4	26.5	Kozhikode	8	31.4	25.0
Ahmedabad	–	34.2	27.1	Kurnool	4	30.1	23.8
Aizawl	2	–	21.3	Lucknow	–	35.2	27.7
Allahabad	–	34.6	28.6	Madurai	–	33.4	26.0
Bengaluru	2.5	26.1	19.8	Mangaluru	13.7	28.6	24.4
Bhopal	–	–	–	Mumbai	124	27.7	24.6
Bhubaneswar	76	28.3	24.8	Mysuru	5	27.0	22.0
Chandigarh	0.6	38.1	29.1	New Delhi	–	36.8	27.6
Chennai	–	36.0	28.3	Patna	–	33.4	28.0
Coimbatore	0.6	30.4	22.6	Port Blair	1	30.1	25.9
Dehradun	0.1	36.3	25.8	Puducherry	–	36.4	25.2
Gangtok	–	23.0	19.1	Pune	20.4	24.3	21.0
Goa	20	28.0	23.8	Raipur	79	28.8	24.6
Guwahati	–	36.0	28.5	Ranchi	4	25.8	22.8
Hubballi	–	24.0	22.0	Shillong	–	27.3	18.8
Hyderabad	4	27.4	21.8	Shimla	12	24.6	17.4
Imphal	8	30.1	21.6	Srinagar	–	31.7	20.0
Jaipur	–	33.3	27.6	Thiruvananthapuram	0.4	29.5	25.0
Kochi	–	30.0	25.2	Tiruchi	–	35.5	26.0
Kohima	1	28.8	17.6	Vijayawada	8	30.2	25.4
Kolkata	9	30.8	26.4	Visakhapatnam	19	30.0	25.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — Yesterday

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	–	–	84	–	–	–
Bengaluru	22	36	127	–	42	
Chennai	4	26	95	30	93	
Delhi	–	116	100	65	120	
Hyderabad	7	5	38	37	43	
Kolkata	8	10	12	16	36	
Lucknow	7	74	50	47	67	
Mumbai	64	12	2	131	–	
Pune	–	42	98	–	–	–
Visakhapatnam	13	36	26	37	71	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 179 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Davanagere, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 10

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

IN BRIEF

'Supply 50 lakh doses of Covishield to Telangana'

HYDERABAD

Telangana Health Minister T. Harish Rao has written to Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya requesting supply of at least 50 lakh doses of Covishield vaccines to the State.

5 lakh students to chant 'Vishnu Sahasranamam'

TIRUPATI

As many as five lakh school students from 17 countries will simultaneously chant 'Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam' from 9 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. on August 10. The main event will be held at Tirumala Nada Neerajana Mandapam.

Madhu lynching: prosecution moves to protect witnesses

Call records show accused trying to influence witnesses

K.S. SUDHI
KOCHI

With 17 witnesses turning hostile during the trial in the tribesman Madhu lynching case, the prosecution is making last ditch efforts to secure the remaining witnesses.

Armed with the call data records of 11 accused to establish that they had contacted the witnesses and influenced them, the prosecution has approached the Special Court for trying the offences booked under the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act case at Mannarkkad for cancelling their bail. The prosecution has identified Marakkar, Shamsudheen, Aneesh, Radhakrishnan, Aboobakar, Siddiq, Najeeb, Jaijumon, Abdul Kareem, Sajeeev and Biju as the ones who had attempted to influences the witnesses. It has also reportedly collected evidence for money changing hands and middlemen attempting to influence the witnesses.

While granting them bail, the Kerala High Court had directed the accused not to contact any witnesses directly or over telephone or otherwise till the trial was over. The monitoring of the e-mails and telephone calls of some of the eyewitnesses who had given statements under Section 164 of the IPC revealed that they were in constant contact with the accused. According to the prosecution, all the accused, who are politically and economically strong, have been trying to derail the judicial process.

The accused had allegedly abducted Madhu, a mentally unsound person, on February 2, 2018, stripped him naked and assaulted him. Two of the accused, who had captured the visuals of the attack, uploaded it on social media. Madhu later succumbed to injuries.

TDP lodges complaint against YSRCP MP

Row over a video involving Madhav

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party (TDPP) lodged a complaint with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla against YSRCP MP Gorantla Madhav, demanding stringent action against him. The complaint comes in the wake of a controversy over an explicit video call involving the Parliamentarian.

"The YSRCP is only interested in bailing out party leaders, including Mr. Madhav, from criminal cases, which is why we have filed a complaint against the MP with the Speaker," TDP MPs Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu and Kanakamedala Ravindra Kumar told reporters in Delhi on Tuesday. "We are confident that the Speaker will act on our letter," they said.

"If the MP was spared, it would set a bad precedent. Action cannot be taken against people if they resort to such activities. The YSRCP is utilising all kinds of weapons to safeguard the MP," Mr. Naidu said.

"Not just MPs from Andhra Pradesh, but all Members of Parliament are discussing the issue of Mr. Madhav. How much time does it take for the forensic lab to issue report on the authenticity of the video," Mr. Kumar asked.

Compulsory rural service: Counselling postponed again

Delay hits 2,000 senior residents, 7,000 MBBS graduates

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Commissionerate of Health and Family Welfare has again postponed counselling for compulsory government service of MS/MD passed-out medical graduates by 10 days. This delay has hit 2,000 senior residents and 7,000 MBBS graduates of the 2019-20 batch.

Condemning the postponement for the second time, members of the Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors (KARD) have demanded that the government should act immediately and conduct the counselling or free them from compulsory rural service.

> **We are unable to join other hospitals because of the bond. Despite being qualified specialist doctors, it is unfortunate that we are still dependent on our parents.**
>
> NAMRATHA C.
> A KARD member

The Karnataka Compulsory Medical Services Act, amended in 2017, prescribes one-year compulsory service in different types of government health institutions for all postgraduates and undergraduates passing out from Karnataka.

The results of the current MD/MS batch were announced by RGUHS on June 18 and the MBBS graduates finished their course in May 2022. Following multiple requests by KARD, the Health Department finally released a notification on July 18 opening up registrations for the counselling.

Further, a second notification was released on July 28 extending the deadline for registration by 10 more days till August 8. This has been again extended by 10 days till August 18, according to a notification issued on Monday. "What we learnt from the officials is that the government is waiting for approval from the Finance Department for creation of additional posts. It has been almost two months that we have been living with uncertainty," said Namratha C., a KARD member. "We are unable to join other hospitals because of the bond. Despite being qualified specialist doctors, it is unfortunate that we are still dependent on our parents," she added.

All smiles

Children dressed in traditional attire taking part in the World Tribal Day celebrations organised by the district Tribal Welfare Department in Vijayawada on Tuesday. • K.V.S. GIRI

Ex-diplomat files complaint against wife

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Former French diplomat Pascal Muzurier filed an extortion case against his estranged wife Suja Jones with the Bengaluru Police on August 5.

In his complaint, Mr. Muzurier, 48, a resident of Bileshivale in Hennur, alleged that Ms. Jones was threatening not to allow him to visit his children, if money is not paid. Mr. Muzurier said he is paying ₹10,000 every month towards maintenance as per a court order.

He accused Ms. Jones of withdrawing ₹40 lakh from his account without his consent.

Now, she is allegedly demanding ₹1.5 crore towards expenses for the children's schooling and threatening not to allow him to visit the children, he claimed in his complaint.

BJP MLC's sons identify themselves with Congress

Vishwanath's son Poorvaj is set to formally join Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Even though former Minister and veteran politician A.H. Vishwanath, who is now a BJP MLC, fell out with the Congress, his two sons continue to be followers of former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Poorvaj with his father, A.H. Vishwanath. • FILE PHOTO

While his elder son Amith Devarahatti had served as the Congress party's Zilla Panchayat member from Bheriya in K.R. Nagar in Mysuru, his youngest son Poorvaj Vishwanath is all set to formally join the Congress shortly. After attending the 75th birthday celebrations of Mr. Siddaramaiah in Davangere recently, Mr. Poorvaj turned up for the padayatra launched by the former Chief Minister to celebrate 75 years of Indian Independence at Tagadur on Monday.

Mr. Poorvaj said he looked up to leadership of Mr. Siddaramaiah, who also belongs to his Kuruba community, and would shortly join the Congress formally. Mr. Poorvaj is following in the footsteps of his brother Mr. Amith, who remained steadfast with the Congress even after his father's resignation from the party.

Mr. Poorvaj said he has known Mr. Siddaramaiah since his younger days.

Mr. Vishwanath quit the Congress after about 40 years of association to join the JD(S) and later the BJP to become an MLC. Though Mr. Vishwanath continues to be critical of Mr. Siddaramaiah, he also does not lose any opportunity to criticise the BJP government in the State.

Criminal case: Partial relief for Rajinikanth's wife

High Court of Karnataka quashes multiple charges, but allows proceedings on charge of forgery

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has quashed charges of cheating, giving false statement and using evidence known to be false levelled against Latha Rajinikanth, wife of actor Rajinikanth, in a criminal case filed by a Chennai-based advertising company in 2015.

However, the court allowed continuation of proceedings against her in a trial court on the charge of allegedly fabricating a document.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna, in his August 2 order, partly allowed Ms. Latha's petition. She had questioned the magistrate court's March 27, 2021 order taking cognisance of various offences against her based on a charge sheet filed by the Bengaluru police in February 2021.

In 2015, Chennai-based Ad Bureau Advertising Pvt. Ltd. had lodged a private complaint in a magistrate court in Bengaluru accusing Ms. Latha of filing a suit in a Bengaluru civil court in 2014 by allegedly producing a fabricated document and getting a temporary injunction against the company and various media houses from making any statement against her in relation to a financial dispute.

The temporary injunction was related to a financial dispute between Ad Bureau and Mediaone Global Entertainment Limited, which had produced Tamil film *Kochadiiyaan*, starring Rajinikanth.

It was claimed that Ms. Latha had not honoured her alleged personal guarantee given to Ad Bureau on behalf of Mediaone to make good the loss from the film, and this issue was widely reported in the print and electronic media.

After the Bengaluru civil court in 2015 returned Ms. Latha's suit for want of territorial jurisdiction and vacated the temporary injunction, Ad Bureau lodged a private complaint, which the magistrate court in June 2015 referred to the police for investigation.

In March 2016, the High Court quashed the complaint stating that it was a result of a civil dispute and there was no ingredient for the offences alleged against Ms. Latha. But in 2018, the apex court allowed continuation of criminal proceedings, and the police filed a charge sheet against her.

Forgery

Now, the High Court has held that the trial court could not have taken cognisance of offences under Sections 196 (using evidence known to be false) and 199 (false statement made in declaration which is by law receivable as evidence) as there is a bar on the court, under Section 195 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, to entertain private complaints for these offences.

The High Court also said that there is no ingredient for the offence of cheating the complainant company.

However, the High Court allowed continuation of proceedings for the offence of Section 463 (forgery) of the Indian Penal Code as it is separable from the offences under Sections 196 and 199 of the IPC.

It was alleged in the complaint that a letter was fabricated in the name of the Publishers and Broadcasters' Welfare Association of India, Bengaluru, a body that does not exist, and the letter was submitted along with Ms. Latha's suit in 2014.

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Space to learn

The failure of SSLV does not have to be a demoralising lesson

The booming excitement over the maiden launch of the Indian Space Research Organisation's new rocket, the small satellite launch vehicle (SSLV), turned to disappointment soon after. This was because the satellites that the vehicle was carrying failed to be placed into the desired orbits and were lost. Breaking a tradition of withdrawal and silence after a failed mission, ISRO announced the details of why the satellites were lost without losing time. The three stages of the SSLV rocket, with their solid propellants, performed as expected and detached smoothly to raise the remaining stages through the determined trajectory. However, in the terminal stage, there was malfunctioning of a sensor, which led to the satellites being placed in an elliptical orbit instead of a 356 km, low-Earth, circular orbit. An elliptical orbit is defined by its long and short axes, just as a circle is defined by its radius. The short axis of the elliptical orbit achieved was small and the height the satellites were above the earth was only about 76 km. At this height, the atmospheric drag would hinder the progress of the satellite and if a huge thrust is not provided, the object would lose height and fall back to the earth, perhaps burning up; in any case it will be invariably lost to the control room. This is what happened to the two satellites being carried by the SSLV.

The SSLV has been promoted as the next workhorse rocket of ISRO after the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). Measuring just two metres in diameter and with a height of 35 m, it is indeed smaller than the PSLV which has been used to place satellites of a wide range of masses. The fact that PSLV carries smaller satellites, too, is something of an overkill, and those with masses up to 500 kilograms can be sent up using the SSLV instead. The SSLV uses solid propellants and this is more economical and easier to handle than the liquid propellant stages of the PSLV. The SSLV has the flexibility to launch multiple satellites, and satellites can be launched on demand – as the rocket requires minimal launch infrastructure. All these features make it very attractive for commercial earth observation and communication. Strategically, too, it makes sense to separate the ranges of mass being carried. This time, however, success was not to be, and the 135 kg Earth Observation Satellite EOS-02 and the 8 kg nano satellite, AzaadiSAT, were both lost. What stood out in this episode was the direct communication of S. Somanath, Chairperson, ISRO, and making available the initial analysis quickly for the benefit of all concerned. It is well known that space agencies around the world invest in testing much more than India does. India's approach, though seemingly economical, might extract a cost at some point. Success in such circumstances is remarkable; and failure a lesson that comes at a cost.

Shared history

India did well at the CWG that is increasingly losing its allure

The Commonwealth Games (CWG), alluding to a happily ever-after between England and its former colonies, may have its legacy issues. And in terms of the competitive yardstick, with the obvious absence of the United States of America, Russia and China, the CWG is considered a notch below the Olympics and the Asian Games. Yet, the CWG has a certain value in being a multi-nation quadrennial event that pits a disparate group of countries split by continents and fused by a shared past linked to the British Empire. It offers athletes one more shot at glory besides inspiring their fans to pursue sport with added vigour. In the latest edition that concluded at Birmingham on Monday, India with a medal haul of 61, inclusive of 22 golds, was placed fourth while Australia, host England and Canada led the charts. With shooting excluded from the CWG, India lost out on an additional yield. Most Indian medals told a tale etched by hope, diligence and hard work. If Sharath Kamal's table tennis exploits, even at 40, proved that sportspersons can fight the dimming light, weightlifter Sanket Sargar's silver in the men's 55kg segment, showed that financial difficulties cannot derail a focused athlete. Four years ago, Sanket used to sell *paan* from a tiny shop at Sangli in Maharashtra, and his is a story that needs to be cherished.

Similar is the personal history linked to weightlifter Achinta Sheuli, who won gold in the 73kg division. Achinta, his brother Alok and mother did embroidery. The siblings also worked in the fields, fighting poverty and coping with the demise of their father. Like Sanket, Achinta's too is a story of hope and redemption. If fresh athletes caught the eye with their triumph over tough circumstances, the established ones reiterated their dominance too. P.V. Sindhu, who will now be counted among India's greatest ever athletes, won gold in the badminton women's singles while her male counterpart Lakshya Sen did an encore. Fresh territories were annexed too as in a field always dominated by the Africans, Avinash Sable won silver in the men's 3000m steeplechase. Boxer Nikhat Zareen again landed a solid punch for women-power while her colleague Lovlina Borgohain's failure and the issues surrounding her personal coach in the lead-up to the CWG, revealed faultlines. Medals were secured in hockey and women's cricket but they were not gold and the respective squads displayed fragility in crunch situations. That sport is not always war minus the shooting was evident when Neeraj Chopra effusively praised Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who won gold in the men's javelin. The latest success in the CWG, should hold the Indian athletes in good stead as they prepare for next year's Asian Games in China.

Withdrawal of the data Bill was a bad move

The enactment of the Personal Data Protection Bill into law would have helped create a framework for redress

VRINDA BHANDARI

In a surprise development last week, the Government withdrew the Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill, 2019, thereby abruptly halting the country's quest for a national data protection law that had been in the works for over five years. The reasons for the Government's decision are brief and cryptic. The short circular issued by the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology simply states that considering the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) – it had proposed 81 amendments and made 12 recommendations – "a comprehensive legal framework is being worked on". "In these circumstances", the Government proposed to withdraw the Bill and present a new Bill "that fits into the comprehensive legal framework".

Multiple iterations, to no avail

Interestingly, there is no elaboration on what such a "comprehensive legal framework" entails. The Government could enact a fresh privacy legislation or a comprehensive data protection law (covering both personal and non-personal data). Alternatively, it could subsume data protection under its ongoing attempts at revising the existing Information Technology Act, 2000. It could also enact a digital markets law, along the lines of the European Union's Digital Services Act, focusing on competition and innovation in the digital space. Unfortunately, the Ministry's circular leaves us with no clarity on the way forward.

The Ministry's attribution of the withdrawal to the JPC Report is also at odds with the proposed amendments of the JPC, which did not recommend withdrawing the PDP Bill in favour of a comprehensive legal framework.

The lack of clarity is compounded by the fact that the circular does not establish any timelines on when the new Bill will be introduced in Parliament, or when it will be passed. This is particularly important, given the drafting history of the PDP Bill. When the Supreme Court of India affirmed the right to privacy in its historic K.S. Puttaswamy judgment in 2017, the nine-judge Bench of the Court referred to the Government's Office Memorandum constituting the B.N. Srikrishna Committee to suggest a draft Data Protection Bill. The committee released its draft Personal Data Protection Bill in 2018, which was the first public articulation of a data protection law in India.

Subsequently, when the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Aadhaar Act, the majority emphasised that it believed that "there is a need for a proper legislative mechanism for data protection". It "impressed" upon the Central government to bring out a "robust data protection regime" through the enactment of a law based on the recommendations of the Srikrishna Committee Report, with modifications as deemed necessary.

In December 2019, the Government introduced the PDP Bill, 2019 in the Lok Sabha as a comprehensive personal data protection regime. Considering the importance of the Bill and the controversies associated with various provisions, the Bill was referred to the JPC for its recommendations. In 2021, the JPC suggested multiple amendments to its re-worded Data Protection Bill, 2021, which privileged state exceptionalism over individual privacy, while continuing to strictly regulate corporate action.

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Now, after five years of hard work and three iterations of data protection legislation, the Government has wasted its efforts to protect our privacy.

The faultlines

The PDP Bill, 2019, as well as the JPC's recommendations in the suggested Data Protection Bill, 2021, suffered from serious lacunae, leading Justice Srikrishna to criticise the Bill for its potential to turn India into an "Orwellian state". First, the Bill's expansive exemptions allowed the state to exempt the entire application of the law simply as if it was "expedient" to do so in the interest of national security or public order. These exemptions did not need to be tabled before Parliament and there was no provision for review or oversight of the Government's decision. In fact, Member of Parliament Jairam Ramesh pointed out in his dissent note, "government agencies are treated as a separate privileged class whose operations and activities are always in the public interest and individual privacy considerations are secondary".

Second, the PDP Bill, 2019 as well as the JPC's version established a strong regulator (the Data Protection Authority) with a lot of power, but very little independence or accountability.

Third, the Bill imposed a strong data localisation mandate, requiring companies to store all sensitive personal data and critical personal data (which was not defined) in India. Despite concerns around surveillance and increased cost of compliance expressed by civil society and the private sector, the Government did not endorse cross-border data transfer.

Finally, the JPC recommended subsuming the regulation of personal data and non-personal data within a single legislation, even though it undermined the Puttaswamy mandate to ensure protection of personal data.

Increasing digitisation, issues

However, despite these real concerns, it was, and continues to be, imperative to enact data protection legislation urgently. India currently has over 750 million Internet users, with the number only expected to increase in the future. The Government is also making a strong push for a 'Digital India', with increased focus on digitisation of access to health, ration, banking, insurance, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a greater focus on the inter-linking of data, whether through facial recognition, Aadhaar, or the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022.

At the same time, India has among the highest data breaches in the world. It has been reported that around 18 of every 100 Indians have been affected by data breaches since 2004, with 962.7 million data points being leaked, primarily personal data points such as names and phone numbers. Without a data protection law in place, the data of millions of Indians continues to be at risk of being exploited, sold, and misused without their consent.

Unlike state action, corporate action or misconduct is not subject to writ proceedings in India. This is because fundamental rights are, by and large, not enforceable against private non-state entities. This leaves individuals with limited remedies against private actors. They can either seek action under the inadequate and ineffective provisions of the Information Technology Act, or file civil/criminal proceedings before a court of law (which itself is time-consuming and expensive).

A personal data protection legislation would remedy this lacuna by providing individuals with proper grievance redress options and creating sufficient deterrence among private actors. Inadequate and flawed as it was, the enactment of the PDP Bill into law would have marked a beginning in providing a redress framework. Instead, we are left with the vague promise of a "comprehensive legal framework", with no timeline in sight.

Consult, work on fresh law

Where, then, do the Government's actions leave us? It is imperative that the Government soon introduces a fresh data protection legislation, drawn after proper public consultation. Such a law should take into consideration the criticisms that have been raised by civil society as well as the private sector. It should be extensively discussed and debated in Parliament.

Even if the PDP Bill is not the most privacy-respecting law, it provides a certain desirable level of protection to the personal data of individuals. Once enacted, there is always scope for judicial review (based on challenges to provisions that are potentially unconstitutional) and parliamentary amendment (by legislators incorporating feedback on the working of the law). That is why even the justifiable criticisms around the PDP Bill, 2019 or the JPC's recommendations do not justify its withdrawal. After all, there is no reason to let perfect be the enemy of good.

Vrinda Bhandari is a lawyer practising in Delhi

Fair trial goes beyond courts, to the police and media

The media needs to aid mechanisms that aim to preserve the basic principles of the justice system

ANINDITA PATTANAYAK

Recently, the Chief Justice of India objected to the lack of media accountability in the media's coverage of legal issues. His remarks came less than a month after the Delhi police admitted to informing the media about the outcome of AltNews' co-founder Mohammed Zubair's bail hearing before the judicial order was even pronounced in open court. While the matter of how this information was known to the police remains an open issue, it is problematic that a considerable portion of its news coverage depicted the remarks of the police officer as fact without waiting for the judicial order.

The police as source

In criminal cases that attract the most sensationalist media coverage, media attention is often drawn toward investigation and early trial stages, with a notable disconnect from eventual outcomes of trial that follow several months or even years after an arrest. This makes the police a crucial source for the media and communication between the two institutions is often a starting point of the troubles of media trials. Unregulated divulgence of case details by an eager police force and disproportionate reliance on this information by the media (to the detriment of the judiciary and other sources), results in a public stripping of the rights that typically accompany a fair trial.

Reportage of this nature violates the presumption of innocence and the right to dignity and the privacy of suspects, the accused, victims, witnesses and persons closely related to them. They often face social ostracisation and difficulties in retaining employment, making them vulnerable to crime and exploitation.

Ineffectual media policies

Though the police are meant to be an independent agency, tasked with truth-seeking (ostensibly an objective shared with the news media), this is not always the case. Police narratives are sometimes designed to achieve political goals, and the media's ready acceptance of these narratives does little to prevent their insidious effects. Given the media's ability to shape political opinion, law enforcement agencies are sometimes under pressure to selectively reveal certain facets of the investigation or to mischaracterise incidents as communal or systemic. Just a few years ago, the investigation of the Bhima Koregaon violence (2018) was marked by a slew of motivated arrests of popular dissenters critical of the Government. While the investigation was underway, the police exposed letters purportedly written by these activists that were still undergoing forensic analysis. While these letters received extensive news coverage, none of them was presented as evidence in court.

The police, when independent from political and corporate influence, are more concerned with demonstrating dynamism and efficiency, rather than the protection of civil liberties. Courts have repeatedly directed law enforcement authorities not to reveal details of their investigations, especially the personal details of the accused, before trial is complete (notably, the Supreme Court in *Romila Thapar vs Union of India*, (2018) 10 SCC 753). Despite this, statutory restrictions on the police

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to maintain confidentiality are rare, with Kerala being one of the few States to have disallowed photographs and parades of persons in custody within its Police Act. Most other States have issued disparate media policy guidelines with weak enforcement mechanisms through administrative circulars whose contents remain unknown to the public. The Ministry of Home Affairs issued a sparse office memorandum outlining a media policy over a decade ago, but this is of limited value given that 'Police' is an entry in the State List and thus falls primarily within the jurisdiction of State governments. In any event, the slew of media reports on arrests, complete with residential and age details of suspects and their photographs, is a strong indication that these internal orders, where they exist, are ignored.

Regulating briefings

Most police departments do not have dedicated media cells, making officials of all levels authoritative sources of information and blurring the boundaries between an official and informal police account of events. As a result, the evidence-based narrative of criminal cases presented by the police to a court varies significantly from the account provided to the news media, much to the detriment of the persons involved in the case, and the justice system as a whole. A range of stakeholders now demand stronger regulation of communication channels between law enforcement and the media. In an ongoing case, the Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties asked the Supreme Court to issue guidelines to regulate media briefings by the police to ensure fair trial. This has left the judiciary with no choice but to deliberate on binding directives to the police.

Indifference of the media

Problematic news coverage of criminal cases arises when reporters absolve themselves of any duty to contextualise information revealed by the police. Media ethics extend beyond verification of facts. Apart from making sure that police narratives are accurate before making them public, reporters bear the burden of translating the significance of police versions in a criminal trial. For example, many reports mention "arrest" without any information about whether such arrests are conducted in the course of investigation or after filing of a charge sheet – an important indicator of the degree of certainty with which the police can assert the claim that they are indeed criminals.

Ignorance of these nuances of the justice system has significant implications for citizens whom it is meant to protect, and contributes considerably to the public apprehension and mistrust in the system. Some of this negligence can be attributed to the changing nature of the newsroom responding to deadlines externally set by competing social media accounts that now qualify as news. With the growing financial pressures on media organisations, beat reporters specialising in crime and legal reporting are becoming rare.

Current media regulation is limited, and rightly so. Government regulation is not uniform for print and television media and enforcement of these regulations, where it occurs, is slow. In any event, Government regulation of the media is problematic and likely to increase politicisation of the press. Self-regulation set-ups such as the National Broadcasting Standards Authority and Indian Broadcasting Foundation are membership-based and easily avoided by simply withdrawing from the group. This weak regulatory environment effectively leaves reporting norms to the conscience of reporters and their editors.

Look inwards

Unfortunately, given the narrow goals of both institutions, it serves neither the interest of the police nor the media to deliberate how information should be disseminated while protecting the persons involved in the case. However, with an increasing call for media regulation, it is now in the immediate interest of the media and the general interest of free press, that media institutions look inward to find an answer to what is essentially an ethical crisis. The media's immense power to shape narratives regarding public conceptions of justice makes it a close associate of the justice system, bringing with it a responsibility to uphold the basic principles of our justice system. The media should feel subject to the obligation to do its part in aiding mechanisms that aim to preserve these principles. On the other hand, a structured and well-designed media policy with training and enforcement mechanisms is the need of the hour for the police.

Anindita Pattanayak is a lawyer and research fellow at DAKSH. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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China ship visit

It is reckless on the part of China to term the legitimate concerns of India regarding the visit of a space and satellite tracking vessel to Sri Lanka as "senseless" (Page 1, "Don't disturb normal affairs with Sri Lanka: China to India", August 9). The visit of a military vessel cannot be considered a "normal affair". Advancing the argument that the vessel is meant for "scientific exploration activities" is ingenious and misleading. This is a clear security threat to India and it has every right to lodge a protest against the visit of the said vessel. Colombo would be within its sovereign right to refuse the ship entry.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

State of Parliament

Is Parliament becoming less and less relevant? With so many days washed out as soon as they commence due to the stand-off between the Opposition and the Government, it is worrying how key business is not discussed. Barring exceptions, Members of Parliament do not seem engaged in attending to people's issues in their constituencies either!

P. MANGALACHANDRAN,
West Ponniam, Kannur, Kerala

Chess Olympiad

There is no doubt that the 44th Chess Olympiad will aggrandise India's power and reputation in chess by several notches. It is heartening that the number of Grand Masters in India has risen drastically. Indian chess is at its peak, and rightly so.

R. SIVAKUMAR,
Chennai

• I write this letter as the parent of a budding chess player. She was interested in watching the 44th Chess Olympiad in person at Four Points Sheraton Mamallapuram. So, we booked tickets for 'Round 11 Slot 2' (3.15 p.m.-5.15 p.m.), on August 9, 2022. It was a shock and a disappointment for us to find that the organisers had already wrapped up Round 11 before 2 p.m. There was no intimation, either by mail or SMS. The security services only told us that they had been instructed by the organisers to close the gates.

MONISHA R.,
Chennai

Navigating Sri Lanka's rocky road to recovery

Focusing on smarter policymaking would ensure a smoother path ahead

ANUSHKA WIJESINHA

R.V. MOORTHY

Sri Lanka's economic crisis has been brewing for a while. Years of policy missteps and a problematic growth model came to a head at the start of 2022, with a debilitating foreign reserves crisis. Shortages of essentials hurt families and firms. A precarious balance of payments position left little buffers to face the shocks emanating from global markets. All this culminated in the people's rejection of the regime that oversaw the economic collapse, an uprising that lasted many months, and the installation of President Ranil Wickremasinghe under extraordinary circumstances, in July. Since the government's announcement in April of a suspension of foreign debt payments, discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on a bailout – an Extended Fund Facility programme – have progressed, and a staff-level agreement (SLA) is being finalised. In recent weeks, there has been a tendency by those in power to blame the people's protest, terming it as "anarchy" and "unrest", for the delay in firming up an IMF deal. This is not only disingenuous but unhelpful in understanding the rocky road ahead.

The road ahead

Even once the SLA is done, the IMF Executive Board will approve a programme and release bailout funds only once it has 'adequate financing assurances'. This means that Sri Lanka would have to secure some agreements with major creditors (to the IMF's level of comfort) and the Fund's major shareholders such as the U.S. would have to be confident of Sri Lanka's fair treatment of all creditors. Until then, other multilaterals like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank will also refrain from lending new money. For Zambia, which defaulted in November 2020, this process took nearly eight months, from concluding an SLA in December 2021 to getting agreement from its bilateral creditor group (which China co-chaired) in July this year. Evidently, Sri Lanka must make reasonable progress on debt negotiations quickly – with private creditors (holders of international sovereign bonds and commercial loans) and bilateral creditors like Japan, China, and India, to convince the IMF's Executive Board.

In this, securing support from China will be key. Chinese authorities have sent hot and cold signals in the months since the debt standstill was announced in April. While China has expressed support for Sri Lanka's talks with the IMF, it is yet to commit fully and publicly to joining negotiations alongside other bilateral lenders. Perhaps China, a relationship-based lender, is waiting for the new government to make fresh overtures at a high level. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's debt advisers – Lazard and Clifford Chance – will commence negotiations with private creditors who hold sovereign bonds. Some of these are likely to get caught up in legal disputes, due to the nature in which Sri Lanka unilaterally defaulted in April.

To be sure, spending a few additional weeks on finalising the SLA might not be a bad thing, if it helps in better grounding the programme in the current socio-political realities. Trying to force through an agreement, which doesn't adequately appreciate the dramatic shifts that have happened, could risk the programme's public acceptance and longevity. There are four key areas that the new administration needs to consider. Firstly, the programme with the IMF cannot focus narrowly on revenue-based fiscal consolidation (simply, higher taxes) alone; it must tackle the spending side too. There is a growing public demand for accountability of public finances, better debt management, and combating politicisation and corruption in government. These are no longer concerns limited to policy wonks; they are shared across society. Mis-prioritised public spending (for instance, the dominance of military spending in the budget) has compromised investments in health, education, and innovation. While higher taxes and a wider tax base are indeed necessary, people's willingness to accept a tighter tax regime will improve when they see greater accountability over how revenue is spent.

Second, domestic political consensus on core reform areas must accompany any IMF programme. It isn't just about 'signing on the dotted line' of an IMF agreement now, but also about ensuring smooth implementation in the years ahead. The economic costs of letting narrow political kowtowing get in the way are too high. The scale of the reforms needed necessitate consensus across political parties and key interest groups. It is encouraging that we saw in recent weeks a group of MPs agreeing to pursue a common minimum programme, which had input from a range of stakeholders. This must get greater traction now, to prevent policy backsliding later.

Third, policymaking must be more inclusive. One of the biggest governance errors of the ousted regime was its tendency towards insular policymaking. The President's COVID-19 task force was chaired by a military commander, not by a health professional or a seasoned civil servant. The design and roll-out of COVID-19-era welfare payments had no inputs from those outside of bureaucratic and military circles. Poverty think tanks and civil society organisations, which understand the impact on families, informal workers, and vulnerable groups, were not welcomed. A COVID-19 economic recovery task force had a handful of non-government members who were from a narrow section of the private sector and just one woman, a political appointee in a public agency. The ill-conceived fertilizer ban was informed by paediatricians and priests, rather than those holding PhDs in agriculture and agro-economists. The Central Bank's Monetary Board and Monetary Policy Consultative Committee were reconstituted to oust those with diverse views and include those who shared the same economic and policy ideology of the government. The new administration should do the opposite: listen to voices more representative of society and allow for dissenting and outsider views in a structured manner.

Fourth, an honest and forward-looking picture needs to be painted. The new government needs to explain what policy steps are being taken, why and when, what the outcomes would be, and how these will help ease economic distress. There needs to be an honest conversation with the electorate, where the government levels with the public, and the public in turn feels that the government has its back.

The way forward

To be sure, getting the IMF agreement from staff-level to a fully-approved one by the Fund's Executive Board has less to do with domestic politics and more to do with the progress of debt restructure talks. Prospective IMF financing is contingent on a fair and expeditious renegotiation process with Sri Lanka's creditors (private and bilateral), to place the country on a path towards debt sustainability. But the future success of an IMF programme, once approved, and overall reforms under its ambit could be greatly determined by domestic politics and smart policymaking. Any attempts to push through a reform programme without clear articulation of its rationale, expected outcomes, and measures to protect the vulnerable will be met with resistance by politicians and the public. Any attempts by Sri Lanka's leaders to tighten their grip over society, under the guise of accelerating an IMF programme, will most likely be met with resistance by a newly awakened and vigilant citizenry.

Anushka Wijesinha is a Colombo-based economist and co-founder of the public policy think tank, Centre for a Smart Future

Rankings that make no sense

There are glaring flaws in the National Institutional Ranking Framework's ranking of higher education institutions

G.S. BAJPAI

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)'s ranking of higher education institutions (HEIs), released in July, has received considerable flak. The broad parameters on which a HEI is ranked by the NIRF are 'teaching, learning and resources', 'research and professional practice', 'graduation outcome', 'outreach and inclusivity', and 'perception'. Each of them is assigned a specific weightage. HEIs are ranked overall, university-wise, college-wise and also under disciplines such as law, medical, pharmacy, management, architecture, and engineering. To show the contradictions, inconsistencies, and flaws in the NIRF's methodology, we have taken law as a case in point.

Data fudging

The NIRF places some private multi-discipline institutions higher than many prestigious national law universities (NLUs) and law departments. It is a fact that students often seek admission into NLUs; private universities and institutions, barring a few, are invariably their last choices. Generally, students who cannot secure a seat in NLUs are admitted to private institutions. Similarly, private universities and institutions are the last choices for those looking for a career in academia. However, the NIRF ranking shows that a private law university scored 100% in perception. If we consider this score, it should have been the most preferred place for students. But the Common Law Admission Test admission choices show a different picture: this institution figures below 10 NLUs as a preferred place to study.

An analysis of the data submitted by some multi-discipline private universities participating in various disciplines under the NIRF provides evidence of data fudging. There seems to be a lack of a rigorous system of verification by the NIRF of the data submitted by HEIs. For instance, the faculty-student ratio (FSR) is an important criterion for ranking. Evidence suggests that some private multi-discipline universities have claimed the same faculty in more than one discipline. Faculty in liberal arts have been claimed as faculty in law too, to claim an improved FSR. This manipulation defeats the purpose of ranking, especially in the case of single-discipline institutions like the NLUs.

There are similar instances of data fudging for parameters like financial resources utilisation (spending on library, academic facilities, etc.) by multi-discipline institutions. Enormous funds have been claimed as expenditure on equipment for laboratories by some private multi-discipline institutions which offer law as a subject. But labs are not required for law. An analysis of the 15 top-ranked institutions under law shows that equipment purchased for one department has been claimed in more than one department. In the case of an institution ranked among the top 15 under law, the expenditure on equipment claimed in engineering, law, management, dental, and medical is nearly double the actual amount spent by that institution. Research funding for research projects and consultancy is an essential parameter for ranking. Data show that research grants and consultancy charges received in other disciplines appear to have been claimed as those in law. Another sub-parameter where data fudging by certain universities is discernible is procurement of books for the library and spending on the library.

No transparency

The NIRF requires the data submitted to it be published by all the participating HEIs on their website so that such data can be scrutinised. Some private multi-discipline universities have not granted free access to such data on their website; instead, they require an online form to be filled along with the details of the person seeking access. Such non-transparency is antithetical to the ranking exercise. There is also discrepancy in the data submitted to the NIRF and the data on the websites of these institutions. For instance, the data uploaded on the websites omit details on the number, name, qualification and experience of the faculty.

Further, the NIRF applies almost the same parameters to all the institutions across varied disciplines in research and professional practice. In this parameter, data on publications and the quality of publications is taken from the Scopus and Web of Science data bases. While these may be suitable for medical and engineering, they are unsuitable for law. There is a gap between the methodology employed for accreditation purposes and for ranking purposes. While the National Assessment and Accreditation Council gives due weightage to publications in UGC-Care listed journals, the NIRF uses publication data only from Scopus and Web of Science.

Thus, severe methodological and structural issues in the NIRF undermine the ranking process. The methodology must be revised in consultation with all the stakeholders.

G.S. Bajpai is the Vice Chancellor of the Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab. Dr. Manoj Sharma, Associate Professor, provided inputs for this piece. Views are personal

STATE OF PLAY

Acrimony over appointments

The Kerala Governor has negated the advantage the government enjoyed in selecting the Vice Chancellor

SARATH BABU GEORGE

The relationship between Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and the State government has entered yet another thorny phase over differences in opinion on the bounds of the Chancellor's role in the functioning of universities. The tussle has been in the making for nearly a year after the Governor confronted the government over the University of Kerala's refusal to confer honorary doctorate on former President Ram Nath Kovind. The reappointment of the Vice Chancellor of Kannur University had also annoyed him. These instances prompted him to declare his unwillingness to continue as Chancellor of universities.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had led the government's rapprochement efforts earlier after the Governor reportedly withheld his assent to the policy address on the eve of the Budget Session of the Legislative Assembly. Nevertheless, the government has quietly endorsed the growing clamour of some States, including Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Odisha, to work towards trimming the powers of the Chancellor over universities in order for the government to gain greater control.

Within a few months, a government-constituted commission that was mandated with overhauling university laws advocated stripping the Chancellor off his discretionary powers. It instead recommended that a University Tribunal be formed to decide on legal matters. It also called for reducing the Governor's authority in the selection of Vice Chancellors. Another Commission tasked with suggesting reforms for the higher education sector has mooted separate Chancellors for each university.

While the government prepared to bring out an Ordinance to implement such reforms in the University of Kerala prior to the selection of the next Vice Chancellor, the Governor made a pre-emptive move by initiating the process on his own without consulting the State government.

Mr. Khan also refused to re-promulgate 11 key Ordinances that have now lapsed. While claiming to have been provided little time to "apply his mind" in examining the Ordinance, he took a swipe at the State government by averring that "ruling through Ordinances is not desirable in a democracy". His comments emboldened the Opposition to accuse the ruling dispensation of adopting an 'Ordinance Raj' to bypass the legislature in implementing contentious laws. The lapsed Ordinances included the contentious Kerala Lok Ayukta (Amendment) Ordinance that amended Section 14 of the Kerala Lok Ayukta Act, 1999 which empowered the ombudsman to remove a corrupt public official from office and prevent the person from holding office again. The Ordinance enabled the Governor, the Chief Minister or the State government to "either accept or reject the declaration".

Mr. Khan also sought an explanation from Kannur University on the politically sensitive appointment of the wife of the Chief Minister's private secretary as an associate professor based on a complaint that UGC rules were flouted to ensure she was appointed.

In a single stroke, Mr. Khan has negated the advantage the government enjoyed in the process of selecting the Vice Chancellor. While a nominee each has been chosen by the Governor and the UGC, the State government can effectively rely only on the nominee sent by the university Senate to further its interests. Governors have conventionally entrusted the governments to choose nominees on their behalf. The onus is now on the government to either accustom itself to the 'new' template in the appointment of Vice Chancellors or to adopt drastic steps as those recommended by its Commissions.

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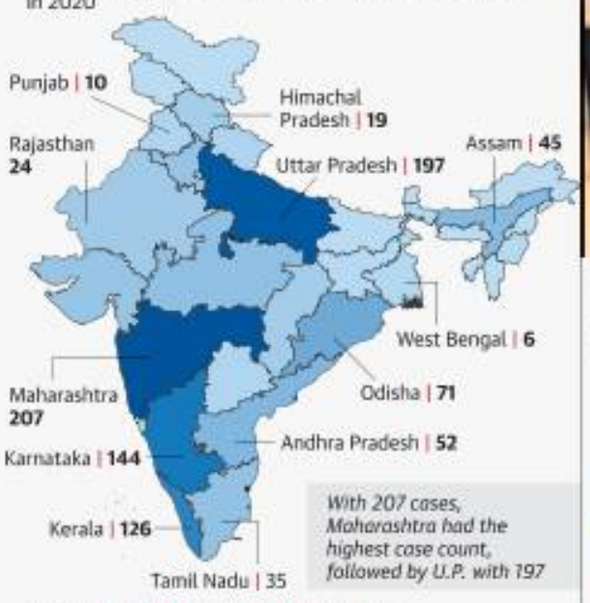
DATA POINT

Cyber criminals go scot-free

Of the over 1,000 cases of cybercrimes committed against children that were sent for trial, between 2017 and 2020, only six have resulted in a conviction and 98% are still pending in various courts. Moreover, only 27% of such cases were charge-sheeted. There has been a significant increase in the registration of such cases in recent years. In 2020, 1,102 cases of cybercrimes against children were reported, from only 88 cases in 2017. Cyber pornography/posting obscene sexual materials depicting children formed 67% of the total cybercrime cases against children in 2020. Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh were the two States where the most cases were reported according to the latest Crime Report by the NCRB. By **Rebecca Rose Varghese**

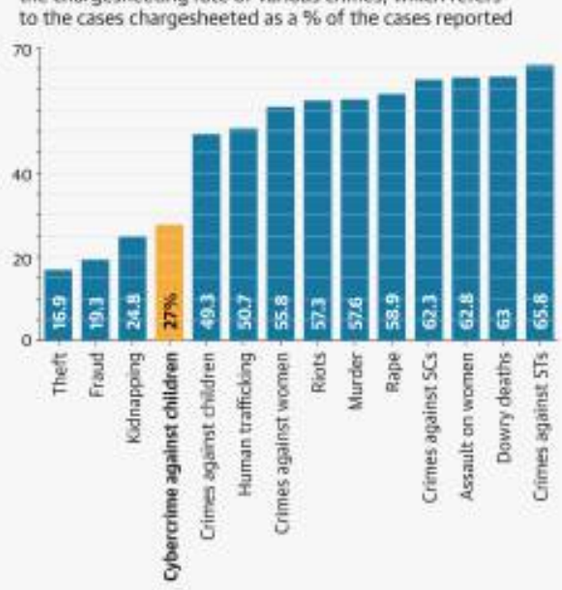
1. STATE-WISE CASES | The chart shows the number of cases of cybercrimes committed against children filed in 2020



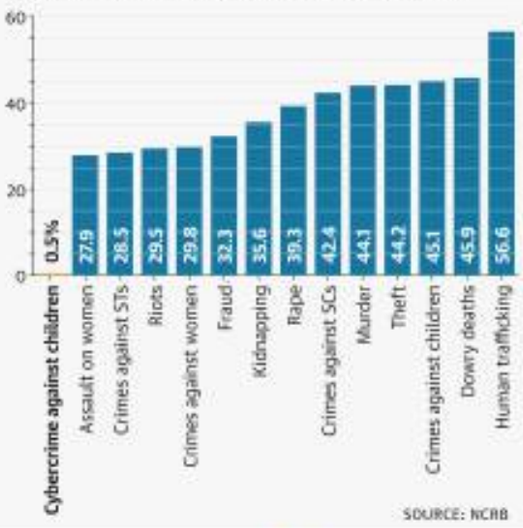
With 207 cases, Maharashtra had the highest case count, followed by U.P. with 197

2. SLOW WHEELS OF JUSTICE | Of 1,727 cases investigated between 2017 and 2020, only 479 were chargesheeted. Of the 1,092 up for trial, only nine reached a verdict (6 convictions, 3 aquittals), with 1,080 cases pending in courts

3. POOR CHARGESHEETING RATE | The chargesheeting rate of cybercrime cases committed against children between 2017 and 2020 was 27%, much lower than the rate for similar crimes*. The chart depicts the chargesheeting rate of various crimes, which refers to the cases chargesheeted as a % of the cases reported



4. POOR CONVICTION RATE | The conviction rate of cases involving cybercrimes committed against children between 2017 and 2020 was 0.5%, much lower than the rate for similar crimes*. The chart depicts the conviction rate of various crimes, which refers to the cases ending in conviction as a % of the cases which completed trial



** for other crimes the chargesheeting rate is for the year 2020*

SOURCE: NCRB

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 10, 1972

Uganda to expel Asians

Kampala, Aug. 9: The Ugandan President, Gen. Amin, announced to-day he was going ahead with his plan to expel all British Asians here. The General also announced that nationals from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh would be given 90 days from to-day to leave the country. His statement followed talks with Britian's High Commissioner in Uganda, Mr. Richard Slater, the Indian and Pakistani envoys and leaders of the Asian community here. Gen. Amin said he had revoked the entry and residence permits of all non-citizen Asians here under a decree he signed to-day. The only exceptions were doctors, dentists, lawyers, owners of industrial and agricultural enterprises, and certain other categories of professional people. About 60,000 people will be affected by Gen. Amin's decision. He said it would be up to those concerned to make their own arrangements to be out of Uganda before the 90-day deadline was up. Gen. Amin said that if they were not out of Uganda before the time-limit was up, "they will be sitting on a fire. They will be sitting very uncomfortably if they stay on."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 10, 1922

Telegraph lines

Simla, Aug. 9: On completion of the telegraph line to Lhasa, the draft telegram to be transmitted over it was a message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to His Excellency the Viceroy. It ran as follows: On the occasion of connecting Lhasa with the outer world by telegraph, I tender the felicitous greeting to His Majesty the King Emperor, your Excellency and Political Officer, Sikkim. The Tibetan Government cordially thank the Indian Government for help in procuring the material and the loan of skilled staff for constructing the line. We all fervently hope that the line will serve to cement a permanent bond of the already existing friendship between our countries and increase trade between us.

His Excellency replied: The cordial greeting which Your Holiness has addressed me in the first telegram ever despatched from Lhasa has given me much pleasure. The linking of Lhasa by telegraph with the outside world through India is indeed a happy augury for continued strengthening of the bonds of friendship between the countries to their mutual benefit and my Government esteem it a privilege to have been able to assist the Tibetan Government in this memorable achievement.

FROM PAGE ONE

Nitish dumps BJP, joins hands with RJD

Apparently hurt with Mr. Singh working to damage him and his party *a la* Eknath Shinde of Maharashtra, Mr. Kumar decided to snap ties with the BJP.

Earlier, in 2013, unhappy with the BJP when it announced Narendra Modi as the prime ministerial candidate, Mr. Kumar had allied with the RJD and the Congress to contest the Assembly elections in 2015 and formed the Mahagatbandhan government in the State. But two years later, in 2017, citing corruption charges against RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav who was his deputy in the Cabinet at the time, Mr. Kumar joined hands with the BJP once again. "He is *palturam* [Mr. turnaround] who does *palti* [turns] for lust of power and chief minister's chair", RJD chief Lalu Prasad had said at that time. Interestingly, it was Mr. Prasad, who is currently recuperating from his ill-health in Delhi, approved the proposal of alliance of his party again on Tuesday with Mr. Kumar. "I thank our party chief Lalu Prasad *ji* for approving a proposal for this alliance in the interest of Bihar and the country", Mr. Tejashwi Yadav said.

Earlier in the day, all JD (U) MLAs, MPs, leaders had a meeting with Mr. Kumar at the Chief Minister's official residence no 1, Anne Marg in which a decision was taken to snap ties with the BJP. Later Mr. Kumar went to the Raj Bhavan to submit his resignation. At the same time, a meeting of RJD MLAs and leaders was held at party leader Rabri Devi's official residence 10, Circular Road. Later, the other Mahagatbandhan allies such as the Congress and the Left parties too joined them when from the Raj Bhawan Mr. Kumar headed there to meet them.

Later Mr. Kumar was elected leader of the Mahagatbandhan and together with the letter of support of 164 MLAs, leaders of the alliance parties met the Governor to stake claim to form the government.

Maharashtra cabinet expanded

The BJP's list of Ministers are: Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil (seven-time MLA from Shirdi in Ahmednagar); party State president Chandrakant Patil (a former MLC and first-time MLA from Kothrud in Pune); Sudhir Mungantiwar (a six-term MLA from Ballarpur in Vidarbha's Chandrapur district); Girish Mahajan (six-term MLA from Jamner in Jalgaon); Vijaykumar Gavit (five-time MLA from Nandurbar); Mangal Prabhat Lodha (five-term MLA from South Mumbai); Atul Save (two-term MLA from Aurangabad); Ravindra Chavan (three-term MLA from Thane) and Suresh Khade (MLA from Miraj in Sangli).

Three BJP heavyweights – Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Pravin Darekar, former Minister Ashish Shelar and influential OBC leader Chandrakant Bawankule – who were expected to be inducted in the first round did not make it. Instead Mr. Chavan, Mr. Khade and Mr. Save were the surprise choices of the BJP.

The Shinde-led Shiv Sena faction inducted Deepak Kesarkar (three-term MLA from Sawantwadi in Sindhudurg district); Gulabrao Patil (two-term MLA from Jalgaon); Dada Bhuse (four-time MLA from Malegaon in Nashik); Tanaji Sawant (first-time MLA from Solapur); Uday Samant (four-term MLA from Ratnagiri); Abdul Sattar (three-term MLA from Sillod in Aurangabad); Shambhuraj Desai (three-term MLA from Satara), Sanjay Rathod (four-term MLA from Yavatmal), and Sandipan Bhumre (five-term MLA from Paithan in Aurangabad) into the new Cabinet. In the Shinde camp, Aurangabad West MLA Sanjay Shirsat – a close confidant of the Chief Minister and a key face of the intra-party rebellion – was denied a berth in the first phase, leading to speculation of disgruntlement. The MLA, however, refuted such suggestions.

Portfolio allocation soon

Stating that the portfolio allocation and the second phase of Cabinet expansion would take place soon, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said: "Everyone [alluding to the Opposition] was asking when the Cabinet expansion would take place. Now it has finally happened. Our government will strive to resolve people's problems in a swift and efficient manner. There is no cause for any differences between the BJP and us [Sena faction]."

The list of 18 Ministers was shrouded in secrecy till the last minute.

With not a single woman leader among the 18, the new Cabinet drew flak from Opposition leaders such as NCP MP Supriya Sule and Uddhav Thackeray camp loyalist Kishori Pednekar. Terming it "unfortunate", Ms. Sule tweeted: "Sad among the 18 Ministers sworn in, no woman has taken an oath today ... Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself says that women empowerment is essential for the progress of the country. For that they should not be just 'home makers' but they should be 'nation builders."

Population an asset to economy: Shah

Modi government brought 60 crore people out of penury, making them aspirational, says Minister

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday that population was an asset to the economy as it was linked to the scale of a market.

Mr. Shah claimed that around 60 crore people were brought out of penury by the Narendra Modi government in the past seven years through various schemes, including free ration, and now they aspire to make a decent living.

"Those who know economics believe that population can also be a strength, and people like me believe that population is an asset as it also a market and represents the scale of market. India's population was 130 crore till 2014 but market was limited to only 70 crore people as the remaining 60 crore did not have purchasing power," Mr. Shah said at a Cooperation Ministry event.

Vital initiative: Ministers Amit Shah and Piyush Goyal at the event to onboard cooperatives on the GeM portal. • PTI

He said that 60 crore people spent their time in arranging just one square meal a day and could not get over the daily tribulations till the government took care of their basic needs and gave them hope to aspire for a better living.

"Modi*ji* solved their problem in one stroke. He gave them a roof, bank accounts, gas cylinders, clean drinking water, health facilities and free ration. Now these people have aspirations. Now that they have got electricity connection, they want a fan or a cooler. Now that food is taken care of, they want a scooter to earn a living. PM has made them aspirational and aspirations can only be fulfilled when basic needs are met," the Minister reasoned.

He said that if 60 crore people had ₹5,000 each in their pocket, they could provide a fillip to the cooperative movement. "Amul is an example; 20 lakh sisters are running a company which has a turnover of ₹60,000 crore," he said.

Digital marketplace

Mr. Shah launched the process through which over 300 cooperatives have been added as buyers on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal to help them purchase goods and services at competitive prices.

In the first phase, all eligible cooperatives with turnover or deposits of ₹100 crore will be able to start placing orders on GeM. There are more than 8.5 lakh cooperatives in India.

Among the major cooperatives that were added on Tuesday were IFFCO, KRIBHCO, NAFED, Amul and Saraswat Co-op Bank.

Mr. Shah asked the cooperatives to also register themselves as sellers on the GeM platform as it would help them to sell their products to a large pool of government buyers.

The government was taking various steps to bring reform in the cooperative sector, such as framing a new cooperative policy, setting up a university for training purposes and establishing export houses, Mr. Shah said.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that the initiative would make trade easy for cooperatives.

National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) president Dileep Sanghani termed it a historic day for cooperatives, saying this would help them in a big way.

Officer injured in attack on Assam Rifles

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Suspected extremists carried out an attack on Assam Rifles personnel in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh on Tuesday, injuring a junior commissioned officer (JCO).

Officials said the extremists, believed to be from the United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) and the Yung Aung faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang), fired the shots from across the Myanmar border at about 3 a.m.

"The troops were undertaking enhanced patrolling activities in view of heightened vigil for the forthcoming Independence Day. A JCO sustained minor injury in the hand," Lt. Col. A.S. Walia, the defence spokesperson based in Assam's Tezpur said in a statement.

Bangladesh river water deal likely

Joint River Commission meeting to decide on agreements on Kushiyara, Ganga

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

India and Bangladesh are likely to ink at least one major river agreement later this month, *The Hindu* has learned.

The planning for the agreement is being tightly guarded by officials on both sides as water sharing between the two countries is considered a sensitive subject given the fact that it often takes political meaning.

Apart from the major agreements under discussion, sharing of data of river waters and better flood control planning are expected to feature in the upcoming meeting of the Joint River Commission (JRC) that will meet in the last week of August ahead of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's September 6-7 India visit.

In response to a query, *The Hindu* learned that there is a "strong possibility" that an agreement on the Kushiyara that flows from Assam into Bangladesh is part of one such agreement that may get "done" during the JRC.

Long history: Indian and Bangladesh Ministers during talks on river waters commission in 1982. • THE HINDU ARCHIVES

A diplomatic source also hinted at a "major agreement" involving the Ganga may also be taken up as there is a "strong urge" to achieve a big river agreement ahead of Prime Minister Hasina's visit, which may be her last trip to Delhi before Dhaka goes into election mode next year.

Teesta waters agreement

The Awami League government has been insistent on sealing the Teesta waters agreement, which has eluded settlement so far. Now, it is understood that India has agreed to offer Bangladesh a package on river waters-related deals that will be considered a significant advancement in terms of sharing of river resources with Dhaka.

While political ties between Delhi and Kolkata have been a reason that apparently stalled Teesta waters, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was in Delhi last week and met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on issues that are relevant to her State.

Ms. Banerjee's visit, which came against the backdrop of the tightly guarded India-Bangladesh negotiation, has contributed to the speculation on river water sharing between India and Bangladesh.

Convening the JRC has been a long-pending demand of Bangladesh as the ministerial-level meeting was last held in 2010.

Customs Dept. to get passenger data

Airlines to share international traveller information to prevent, probe offences

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Airlines will have to mandatorily provide details of all international passengers to the Customs Department for preventing offences and prosecuting offenders under the Customs Act, 1962 and any other domestic or international law.

Every airline will have to transfer the "passenger name record information" from their reservation system to the database of the Customs Department for every international flight departing from India or arriving into the country, according to the Passenger Name Record Information

Regulations, 2022 notified by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) under the Ministry of Finance on Monday.

The information such as passenger name record (PNR), date of travel, credit card details and seat assigned will have to be shared at least 24 hours before departure and failure to comply will invite a minimum penalty of ₹25,000 and maximum of ₹50,000 for every act of non-compliance, the regulations say.

The rules note that the National Customs Targeting Centre for Passengers or the database set up by the CBIC will collect the information for "risk analysis of passengers" for the purpose of "prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of offences under the Act [Customs Act, 1962]."

Such data can also be shared with law enforcement agencies or government departments of India or any other country under regulation 10.

Regulation 10 further states, "When the passenger name record information relates to any offence, under any law for the time being in force, at national or international level, the National Customs Targeting Centre for Passengers, may share the relevant information on a case-to-case basis."

Such data will be retained for a maximum period of five years after which it will be disposed of by depersonalisation or anonymisation but can be "re-personalised and unmasked when used in connection with an identifiable case, threat or risk for the specified purposes".

4.5 lakh postal staff to strike work today

Protest planned against privatisation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

About 60% of the 4.5 lakh employees in the Postal Department will strike work on Wednesday against the proposed corporatisation and privatisation of various arms of the department, claimed the National Federation of Postal Employees (NFPE) that has given the call for the strike.

NFPE secretary-general Janardan Majumdar said the department used the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to utilise the Dak Mitra scheme to "subsume" all existing failed franchises outlets. He said the correct way to meet the demand for more post offices was opening of new ones and not through franchise.

"Sudden growth of franchise will only eat into the income of the department and in no way be helpful for the finances of the department," he said.

Small savings scheme

Another major worry of the employees is that the Centre is corporatising the small savings scheme, which has about 30 crore accounts and nearly ₹10 lakh crore outstanding balance. Nearly 50% of the department's revenue is from these savings banks.

"But the department is inclined to develop the infrastructure of Indian Postal Payment Bank (IPPB) Ltd. The intention of the Centre and the department is to strengthen the IPPB, which was clear from the last budget speech of the Finance Minister too. Our apprehensions came true when the Centre announced recently that Core Postal Operation should be the domain of the department and rest of the operations should be merged with the IPPB. It also mentions that in financial sectors there will be no dual structure and only single IPPB structure to be used for banking, insurance and other financial needs," he said.

Sudden growth of franchises will eat into department's income, says union.

'Dangerous steps'

Mr. Majumdar added that the Prime Minster was likely to announce migration of post office savings bank accounts to IPPB Ltd. on August 15.

"Already they have ordered DoP staff to work in the IPPB. Actually, these are disastrous steps which will finally legalise the grip of corporates over the huge amount of public money deposited in Post Office Savings Banks (POSB). Also the security of this huge amount of public money will be under question. The Centre should hold discussions with these investors and employees before changing the character of the POSBs," he added.

A-G seeks adjournment of Maharashtra Wakf Board case

Venugopal writes to SC, cites 'bid to remove him from case'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal has written to the Secretary-General of the Supreme Court for an adjournment in the Maharashtra State Board of Wakfs case till he recovers from the effects of COVID-19.

In his letter, he recounted the "startling" series of events to remove him and his team of lawyers from representing the State-run body.

"Looking at the entirety of what has emerged, it seems that whoever is behind the events that have transpired, whether it is the beneficiaries of the transfer or anyone else, is bent upon ensuring that the Attorney-General does not argue this case," Mr. Venugopal wrote to the Secretary-General in the letter dated August 8.

Earlier letter

In an earlier letter to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, he had narrated how he is being "targeted" through a "serious, uncalled-for and unwarranted attempt" to remove him as the lawyer for the Board.

Mr. Venugopal had said the move to remove him in such a manner would even call for contempt action.

The Board, a statutory body, manages Wakf property running into acres and worth crores in the State. Mr. Venugopal was representing the Board in a batch of petitions on the seminal question whether every charitable trust established by a person practising Islam was necessarily a Wakf.

Wakf is the property given in the name of God for religious and charitable purposes.

Taking a serious note of the Board's "casual" treatment of the country's top law officer and constitutional authority, Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana had said, "This is not the way to behave to the Attorney General... This is improper."

India terms Gaza violence as grave concern in UN meet

Indian representative calls for Israel-Palestine discussions

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Calling for immediate resumption of talks between Israeli and Palestinian governments during an emergency session on violence in Gaza at the UN Security Council, India thanked the Egyptian government in particular for helping broker a ceasefire effective midnight on Tuesday.

The ceasefire came after three days of Israeli bombardment of Gaza buildings, in which more than 40 people, including 15 children were killed, while hundreds of rockets from Gaza were aimed close to Jerusalem, in violence that India said it views with "grave concern".

"Long-term peace in Israel and Palestine can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution leading to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side, at peace with Israel, taking into consideration the legitimate security needs of Israel," said India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ruchira Khamboj, adding that the "immense suffering" and loss of "precious civilian lives" was a matter of "grave concern" for India.

Speaking in one of her first interventions after presenting her credentials to UN Secretary General last week, Ms. Khamboj, India's first woman Ambassador to the UN, said that of particular concern to India was the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, and called on the international community to prioritise a return to talks on the conflict.

Israeli defence forces claimed that the aerial bombardment was an operation targeting a militant group called the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and that Israeli jets had killed several of the group's leaders during the weekend bombing.

IN BRIEF

Permanent medical bail to Varavara Rao opposed

NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has objected to granting permanent medical bail to Telugu poet-activist Varavara Rao in the Bhima Koregaon case, saying he is one of those persons who gave mileage to the subversive activities of Naxalites which has caused immense destruction and been a cause of many deaths among the police and security personnel. In an affidavit, the NIA said "the act of the petitioner/accused has a direct impact on the unity, integrity, security and sovereignty of India".

Kejriwal to announce a new 'promise' for Gujarat

AHMEDABAD

In his fourth visit in two weeks, Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal is to arrive here on Wednesday to interact with the people and announce a new 'guarantee' or promise in the poll-bound Gujarat. He will be holding the second Town Hall event in the city to interact with the people and talk about the various welfare promises the AAP will offer to the people of the State in the run up to the crucial Assembly polls in the home State of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Nine killed in road accident in West Bengal

SURI

At least nine persons, including eight women, died when an autorickshaw and a West Bengal State transport bus collided on National Highway-60 in Birbhum district on Tuesday, a police officer said. Birbhum district Superintendent of Police Nagendra Nath Tripathi said that the eight women were passengers of the three-wheeler and the ninth victim its driver. The women were returning home after working in a paddy field. The mishap occurred at Mallarpur near Rampurhat. The bus was on its way to Durgapur from Arambagh. PTI

BJP expected it, but the suddenness unsettled party

State party leaders had an inkling that Nitish would go his way after the rift between the partners widened on issues such as special status for Bihar and caste census

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Soon after Nitish Kumar went to the Raj Bhavan to offer his resignation as Chief Minister in Bihar on Tuesday, the BJP's State leaders were at a loss of words and taken aback by the sudden, yet expected move.

"Nitish has betrayed us but with this he has lost his credibility. He had prime ministerial ambitions but in the NDA, we cannot make him PM candidate," senior BJP leader and Union Minister Giriraj Singh said. The BJP leaders huddled together late on Tuesday evening to mull the party's next strategy. However, most of the State BJP leaders preferred not to make any comment.

The political grapevine was that State BJP leaders had an inkling that Mr. Kumar could take such a move of "betrayal" after the rift between both the partners widened on several issues such as demand for special status for Bihar and caste census. "But, it would come so soon, we had not anticipated," a lower-rung BJP leader said. He also rued that "from the top party leadership, there was no move to speak to, or convince, Mr. Kumar".

Back to the start: JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar, right, and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav leaving together after their meeting with Governor Phagu Chauhan in Patna on Tuesday. •PTI

Nadda's statement

Recently, BJP president J.P. Nadda had said that in the days to come, all regional parties would vanish and only the BJP would remain a political party at the national level. "This statement of Mr. Nadda meant that the BJP wanted to crush regional parties and the voice of the Opposition which has been an important part of democracy. That means the BJP wanted to crush democracy from the place from where it got originated," RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said. "This statement of Mr. Nadda certainly got the regional parties like the JD(U) and others apprehensive and might have triggered the sudden move of Nitish."

Besides, recently the BJP held its joint national executive committee meeting of seven frontal organisations in Patna and asked all its 750 delegates to visit 200 out of the 243 Assembly constituencies of the State to get feedback from people regarding the coming 2024 polls. "Why only 200, the BJP could send its delegates to all 243 constituencies," rued JD(U) national president Rajiv Ranjan Singh, aka Lalan Singh. "This move had also alarmed Nitish and his party leaders that the BJP now wants to gobble up its ally JD(U)," he said.

Sources in the JD(U) told *The Hindu* that Mr. Kumar, though, was mulling over snapping ties with the BJP since long but the "RCP Singh episode" prompted him to take the decision soon to "avoid a Maharashtra-like situation". "The BJP was using RCP Singh like Eknath Shinde to play Maharashtra-like political game but the alert JD(U) leader nipped that move in the bud," said a JD(U) leader.

Brazen betrayal of the people, say party leaders

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

It was a dejected-looking BJP Bihar president Sanjay Jaiswal who spoke to pressmen in Patna as his party's alliance government with the Janata Dal(U) came tumbling down on Tuesday. It was a short meeting, which perhaps reflected the feeling in the BJP State unit that as of now, it was Chief Minister and Janata Dal(U) leader Nitish Kumar who had all the aces up his sleeve. In Delhi, however, talk of the 2024 Lok Sabha election loomed large, with party leaders saying the alliance of the JD(U) and the Rashtriya Janata Dal will have internal contradictions, which will help recreate some political momentum for the BJP by then.

"We fought the 2020 polls together under the NDA, and the mandate was for the JD(U) and the BJP. We won more seats; despite that, Nitish Kumar was made the Chief Minister. Whatever happened today is a brazen betrayal of people of Bihar and the BJP," Mr. Jaiswal said. His words were echoed by Ministers from Bihar in the Central government, Ashwini Choubey and R.K. Singh. In the Delhi office of the BJP, talk was already on what next.

Inorganic political mesh

"The only choice is to play the Opposition, raise issues, and go to the people. In Bihar, at the district level, it is the RJD which dominates and JD(U) is nowhere. In the local police station and in the village, the RJD remains dominant. This will create an inorganic political mesh," said a senior leader from Bihar in New Delhi.

"It is a setback to lose the government in Bihar, but we have two years till the next important election," the leader said.

Nitish Kumar breaking alliance with BJP is a strong indictment of the politics of intimidation practised by BJP. Its authoritarianism leaves no scope for cooperation
D. RAJA
CPI general secretary

Bihar politics: another big reason why Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah ran away and shut down Monsoon Session four days early
DEREK O'BRIEN
Trinamool Congress leader

Nitish Kumar has once again insulted the people's mandate. He has lost his credibility... Is it a joke? At one time you go with somebody and the other time with someone else
CHIRAG PASWAN
LJP (Ram Vilas) leader

It's a white lie that BJP made R.C.P. Singh Union Minister without Nitish Kumar's consent and wanted to break JD(U)
SUSHIL MODI
BJP leader

It is a betrayal of the mandate given to the NDA in 2020 by the people of Bihar
R.C.P. SINGH
Former JD(U) leader

A 'good start', says Akhilesh

STAFF REPORTER
LUCKNOW

As Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar severed ties with the BJP on Tuesday, Samajwadi Party (SP) president and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav finds new hope for Opposition parties in the country.

Mr. Yadav said, "It's a good start. On this day the slogan of *Angrezo Bharat Chhodo* [Quit India Movement] was given, and today, the slogan of *BJP Bhagaon* ["get rid of BJP"] is coming from Bihar. I think soon political parties and the people in different States will stand against the BJP."

The former Chief Minister was interacting with mediapersons as he embarked on a march from Jhauva village in Kannauj district during the party's *Tiranga* campaign on Quit India Day.

Mr. Yadav alleged that people may lose their right to vote if the BJP was allowed to become stronger, and accused the ruling dispensation of undermining India's democratic institutions.

Addressing a gathering, he said, "If these people become very powerful, we may lose the voting right also. I am not joking. Is there any election in China. In Pakistan, the Army rules and install whoever they want to in the government. Is election taking place in Myanmar and its surrounding countries? So, be careful.".

Mr. Yadav alleged the BJP was trying to change history and ignoring the freedom fighters.

Nitish will join long list of Opposition PM-hopefuls

Congress now backs him in Bihar

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

The Congress was prompt in extending support to the Janata Dal(U) chief Nitish Kumar but his return to the Opposition fold will certainly add to the numbers of contenders who are looking at a leadership role in the run-up to the Lok Sabha election of 2024.

Mr. Kumar, sources said, reciprocated by calling up Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and her son, Rahul, soon after exiting the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and resigning as Chief Minister.

The Congress is likely to actively participate in the next Bihar government but the question that is being asked in political circles is about Mr. Kumar's role for the 2024 polls.

"I think it's too early to comment at this stage. But in a democracy, the party that wins the highest number of MPs usually takes the leadership role," Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Tariq Anwar told *The Hindu*.

In the context of Bihar, he added, "Ours is an ideological battle and we are not fighting for power. The Congress will support any non-BJP government and help strengthen secular forces."

But with a weakened Congress following successive losses in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the race to become the face of the Opposition before the next general elections has become crowded.

Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, her Telangana counterpart and Telangana Rashtra Samithi chief K. Chandrashekhar Rao and Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Admi Party (AAP) convener Arvind Kejriwal have already expressed their prime ministerial ambition.

Being from the Hindi heartland and having had the experience of running a State as well as being a Cabinet Minister in the past, Mr. Kumar could score over his rivals.

Nitish Kumar had called up Congress chief Sonia Gandhi ahead of his resignation.

AAP's message

Though leadership for 2024 is an issue that most Opposition parties don't want to discuss at this stage, Mr. Kejriwal took to Twitter to talk about his party's growing political footprint.

"After Del n Punjab, AAP is now a state recognised party in Goa too. If we get recognised in one more state, we will officially be declared as a "national party". I congratulate each and every volunteer for their hard work. I thank the people for posing faith in AAP n its ideology," tweeted the Delhi Chief Minister, hours before the JD(U)'s formal exit from the NDA.

BJP crushes its allies: Tejashwi

RJD leader says saffron party has no friends in the Hindi heartland

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav on Tuesday said the BJP was left with no allies in the Hindi heartland after JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar severed ties with the saffron party in Bihar.

"BJP crushes its allies. But now BJP is left with no allies in Hindi heartland. Together with Nitish Kumar*ji*, we will work in the interest of Bihar, nation, poor people and suppressed people," Mr. Yadav told presspersons outside the Raj Bhavan.

Mr. Yadav, along with Mr. Kumar and leaders of other allied parties, had gone to the Raj Bhavan with a letter of support of 164 MLAs to meet Governor Phagu Chouhan to stake claim to form the next government in the State.

Tejashwi Yadav

Mr. Yadav is set to become the Deputy Chief Minister in the new government, while Mr. Kumar will take oath as the Chief Minister for the eighth time in the State.

Mr. Yadav was the Deputy Chief Minister in the 2015 Mahagathbandhan government too, before Mr. Kumar severed ties with the RJD and joined hands with the BJP in 2017.

Tackling real problems

"Today the real issues in the country are unemployment, inflation and poverty, and together we will try to tackle all these problems," Mr. Yadav said.

The RJD leader also thanked Mr. Kumar for taking the decision to come out of the National Democratic Alliance in the State.

"I would like to thank Nitish Kumar*ji* for being a leader who takes such bold decisions. Our party leaders and workers did not want that BJP to be allowed to put its agenda in Bihar," he said.

He added that the BJP wanted to "end democracy from the place where it originated".

On whether Mr. Kumar would be the Prime Minister candidate in 2024, Mr. Yadav said, "I will let Nitish*ji* answer this question". However, both leaders threw smiles at the cameras before slipping away from the place.

Nitish's wavering affections for BJP and RJD

He has snapped ties with both parties and returned to them even after bitter and public splits

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

In the next few days, Janata Dal(U) leader Nitish Kumar will be sworn in for the eighth time as Chief Minister of Bihar. Since November 2005, when he began his first full term as Chief Minister trouncing the RJD government, he has been picking and choosing allies without letting go of the Chief Minister's chair.

The association between Mr. Kumar and RJD leader Lalu Prasad dates back to university days. He campaigned for Mr. Prasad when he contested and won the post of president of Patna University Student's Union in 1973. Mr. Kumar was a key advocate for Mr. Prasad in a keenly contested battle within the Janata Dal (JD) for the Chief Minister's post, propelling Mr. Prasad to the post in March 1990, for the first time.

Shared past: Nitish Kumar and Lalu Prasad's association dates back to their time at the Patna University. •FILE PHOTO

But within two years of this battle, the spell had been broken, and Mr. Kumar and Mr. Prasad were no longer on talking terms.

His rebellion did not bear immediate fruit. In 1995, in the Bihar Assembly election, Mr. Kumar's newly formed Samata Party bit the dust with just seven seats.

It was sometime after this ignominious defeat that Mr. Kumar met then BJP president L.K. Advani and in no time, an alliance was cemented on the foundation of an anti-Lalu Prasad sentiment.

After the Gujarat riots in 2002, many allies quit the Vajpayee government, but Mr. Kumar was not one of them.

He did not speak out against then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi but in 2005, he did not allow Mr. Modi to campaign for the Bihar Assembly election.

Therefore it was not a coincidence when in June 2013, just a week after Mr. Modi was named chief of BJP's 2014 Lok Sabha campaign, Mr. Kumar walked out of the 17-year-old political partnership with the BJP. The given reason was the need to uphold "secularism". But insiders claim that Mr. Kumar who has always nursed an ambition to occupy the national stage was rattled by Mr. Modi's popularity.

Two years later, ahead of the November 2015 Assembly election, he was back with arch nemesis Mr. Prasad, simultaneously nursing an ambition to be the face of an anti-BJP front. But in 2017, Mr. Kumar walked out of the much-feted 'Mahagatbandhan' and into the BJP.

Congress's *Bharat Jodo* Yatra from September 7

The march covering 3,500 km across 12 States and two UTs will be completed in about 150 days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Kanyakumari to Kashmir *Bharat Jodo* [unite India] yatra will now begin on September 7 instead of October 2, the Congress announced on Tuesday that coincided with the 80th anniversary of the launch of the Quit India Movement.

"On this day, 80 years ago the Indian National Congress under the leadership and inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement that won the country freedom five years later. Today, the Indian National Congress announces the launch of its Kanyakumari to Kashmir *Bharat Jodo Yatra* from September 7, 2022," Congress general secretary and party's communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh said in a statement.

Revival bid: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh with Gaurav Gogoi at a press conference in New Delhi on Tuesday. •PTI

The *padayatra* (foot march) will cover about 3,500 km across 12 States and two Union Territories and will be completed in about 150 days. "Congress workers and leaders including Rahul Gandhi will participate in the yatra," Mr. Ramesh said.

Mr. Ramesh also appealed to all those "who have been wanting to be part of a gigantic national endeavour to provide "an alternative to the politics of fear, bigotry and prejudice, and to the economics of livelihood destruction, increasing unemployment and growing inequalities" to participate in the yatra.

RSS' questionable role

Attacking the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Mr. Ramesh tweeted to enquire about the RSS' role when Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India movement.

"It was on the sidelines, dissociating itself from the mass movement. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee took no part while Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Azad, Prasad, Pant and many others were jailed," he said.

'Historic occasion'

In a separate statement, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi recalled the historic occasion of Aruna Asif Ali holding aloft the National flag when lakhs and lakhs of Congress workers were beaten and jailed.

"Her act of courage became the symbol of our quest for freedom. As we commemorate the Quit India movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, let us not forget the price that millions of our countrymen and women paid for India's freedom. Let us renew our resolve to defend it and protect it with all our might," Ms. Gandhi said.

House Session curtailed on request of MPs, says Joshi

Cong. alleged that government had no agenda for session

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi accused Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and Gaurav Gogoi of peddling lies after the Opposition leaders accused the government of ending the Monsoon Session of Parliament four days ahead of schedule.

"#MonsoonSession was not adjourned 4 days in advance, as is being claimed but only 2 days ahead of schedule. This decision was taken on the request of MPs including those from Opposition," Mr. Joshi said in a series of tweets. "Opposition's propaganda is discussion but agenda is disruption and boycott," he added.

Pralhad Joshi

Earlier in the day, Mr. Ramesh, who is the Congress Whip in the Rajya Sabha and Mr. Gogoi, the party's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha, addressed a joint press conference in which they charged the government with having no agenda for the Monsoon Session.

Calling the session "highly disappointing", the Congress leaders said the Narendra Modi government did not have the appetite to run proceedings till the scheduled date of August 12.

The Congress leaders said the government listed 32 Bills at the start of the session, but managed to pass only seven in the Lok Sabha and five in the Rajya Sabha.

Monkeypox complications more common in children, says report

However, doctors say it is too early to come to a conclusion on the matter

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

Complications associated with monkeypox are more frequent in children and immunocompromised people than in healthy adults, with an increased risk of bacterial superinfection, sepsis, keratitis and respiratory complications due to pharyngeal abscess and pneumonia, or encephalitis, noted an article titled "The monkeypox outbreak: risks to children and pregnant women" in the medical journal *The Lancet, Child and Adolescent Health*.

The article further said that previous monkeypox outbreaks had seen increased mortality and hospitalisation rates in children even in high-income countries such as the U.S., in which the only two severe presentations during the 2003 outbreak were observed in the paediatric population. India is yet to register any case of monkeypox in children and doctors here have so far dismissed the idea of increased threat to children stating that it is very early to come to any conclusion on the matter.

Close check: Passengers arriving at the Chennai airport being screened for monkeypox symptoms. • FILE PHOTO

Source of spread

"Though not common in children, they are not immune to this dreaded disease. In the initial period of the epidemic they are more likely to pick up the infection from adult close contacts. However, once an infected child continues to go to school when infected but not yet diagnosed and isolated, he can become a source of spread to his classmates and friends. At present there is a need to educate the general public regarding the symptoms and preventive measures of monkeypox," said Dr. Krishan Chugh, head of paediatrics department, Fortis Memorial Research Institute. The *Lancet* article also notes that all available smallpox vaccines offer good protection against monkeypox infection and can be used for pre-exposure or post-exposure prophylaxis (action taken to prevent disease).

Meanwhile, the Health Ministry, in its guidelines, said that monkeypox is usually a self-limiting disease with the symptoms lasting two to four weeks.

"Severe cases occur more commonly among children and are related to the extent of virus exposure, patient health status and nature of complications. The extent to which asymptomatic infection occurs is unknown. The case fatality ratio of monkeypox has historically ranged from 0 to 11% in the general population and has been higher among young children. In recent times, the case fatality ratio has been around 3-6%," it said.

Dalits' Coin Yatra ends as Centre refuses permission

Its objective was to give money for work on new Parliament

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Coin Yatra, undertaken by over 350 Dalits with two truckloads of ₹1 coin to the value of ₹20 lakh and a 1,000-kg brass coin with the faces of B.R. Ambedkar and the Buddha emblazoned on either side, was stopped on its tracks at the Rajasthan-Haryana boundary near Shahjahanpur by the police on Sunday night.

The activists were shown a letter from the Ministry of Home Affairs, specifically stating that the Coin Yatra not be allowed to proceed, said Dalit activist Martin Macwan, who helped organise the Yatra.

The objective of the yatra was donating money towards the construction of the new Parliament complex. The activists wanted to ask the government if it will be able to eradicate the menace of untouchability by the time India arrives at the 100th year of its Independence. "Dalits are always shown as seeking something. We were not coming to Delhi to seek alms. We were going there to donate money to the government and ask for a commitment from them to eradicate untouchability, which is still prevalent in the country," Mr. Macwan told *The Hindu*.

The yatra carried a brass coin with faces of B.R. Ambedkar and Buddha on either side.

Violence against Dalits

The activist went on to say that the objective of the Coin Yatra was to ask the government, "What is this Independence if violence against Dalits keeps increasing? What is this development if such violence is showing no signs of going down?"

Along with the truckloads of coins and the brass coin, which was made from melting brass utensils donated by Dalit families, the Yatra also had a statue of Dr. Ambedkar and a sculpture of the Indian Constitution, he said.

"Our initial plan was to hold an event in Delhi on August 8 but we were stopped in Haryana by a large contingent of police personnel, Vajra vehicles and barricades, and law-enforcement officials prepared to use tear-gas on us," he said. However, the police had been accommodating and did not use force, he said.

The activists, on their part, refused the police's offer and chose to return to Gujarat and other parts of the country from where they had joined the march.

New privacy features on WhatsApp

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

WhatsApp on Tuesday announced new privacy features, following which users of the instant messaging service will now be able to leave groups silently as well as choose who can see when they are online. WhatsApp will also block taking screenshots for 'view once' messages.

With the 'Leave Groups Silently' features, WhatsApp users will be able to exit a group privately without having to notify everyone. Now, instead of notifying the full group when leaving, only the admins of the group will be notified. This feature will be rolled out to all users this month.

Private online presence

"Seeing when friends or family are online helps users feel connected to one another, but everyone has had times when they wanted to check their WhatsApp privately. For the times you want to keep your online presence private, WhatsApp is introducing the ability to select who can and can't see when you're online," the company said in a statement, adding that this feature will start rolling out to all users this month.

Additionally, the application will now block taking screenshots for 'View Once Messages'. It noted that 'View Once' is already an incredibly popular way to share photos or media that don't need to have a permanent digital record. "Now WhatsApp is enabling screenshot blocking for View Once messages for an added layer of protection. This feature is being tested and will be rolled out to users soon," the company said.

The messaging service added that the introduction of these new features are backed by a new WhatsApp privacy study which found that 72% of people value being able to speak in an honest, unfiltered way, but more than 47% are only comfortable doing this in a safe, private space.

'Murmu's election showcases strength of India's democracy'

Arjun Munda meets President on Indigenous Peoples Day

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

It is a proud moment for India that as it celebrates the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a tribal woman, Droupadi Murmu, has been elected President of the country, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda said on Tuesday in a virtual interaction with students of the Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS).

Marking the occasion, Mr. Munda, Minister of State Bishweswar Tudu and other senior Ministry officials attended a virtual interaction session with students of the 378 Ekalavya Model Residential Schools from the National Tribal Research Institute in New Delhi.

A government statement said that in their interaction with the Minister, the tribal students "expressed their happiness" that Ms. Murmu, a tribal woman, had been elected President. Mr. Munda said, "Ms. Murmu's journey is an inspiration for all the tribal persons of India. On this special day, her election as President showcases the strength of Indian democracy."

Essay competition

Speaking to the students, Mr. Munda announced an essay writing competition for EMRS students on tribal heroes like Birsa Munda to celebrate the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, celebrated in India on November 15. The Minister invited the students to write their essays and send them to the Ministry.

Mr. Munda further urged students to plant trees in their schools and villages to conserve the environment and inspire others to do the same in keeping with tribal culture – which gives primacy to the importance of *Jal*, Jungle, and *Jameen* [water, forest and land]. He urged all students across EMRS schools in the country to actively participate in the *Har Ghar Tiranga* campaign from August 13 to August 15.

Mr. Munda also met with Ms. Murmu later in the day at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs said in a tweet.

Silent marches to recall Partition

First-ever Partition Horrors Remembrance Day to be observed on August 14

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The first-ever Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced last year, would be observed on August 14. The event will be commemorated with silent marches centred on 75 refugee colonies, according to government sources familiar with the plans.

The marches were likely to begin or end at a Partition refugee residential colony, with the one being planned in Delhi expected to have thousands of participants, one of the sources said.

In the run-up to August 14, the Culture Ministry had planned exhibitions at nearly 5,000 locations.

The photos and text for the exhibition had been uploaded on the website for *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* for participating institutions to download and print, the source said. Schools, colleges and post offices were among those locations where the exhibition would be displayed from Wednesday till August 14.

The same exhibition had been inaugurated at Parliament House on Tuesday and visited by Union Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, among others. "The website exhibits the stories of struggles and sacrifices of millions who were displaced during partition. I urge people to organise exhibitions at important public places or through digital platforms to further strengthen the spirit of oneness while being conscious of our past," Mr. Reddy had said in a tweet.

Mr. Modi had announced on August 14, 2021 that the day would be marked as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day from 2022 onwards.

In memory of: Om Birla with G. Kishan Reddy during the inauguration of an exhibition on 'Horrors of Partition'. • PTI

Hold exhibition on horrors of Partition, says UGC

NEW DELHI

The University Grants Commission has written to all colleges and universities to hold an exhibition on Partition Horrors Remembrance Day. It cautioned against hurting the sentiments of any section of society and urged that the exhibition be showcased "with the sobriety and solemness that it deserves."

Noida politician Shrikant Tyagi arrested from Meerut

He had assaulted a woman in his housing society

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

Four days after he allegedly assaulted and abused a fellow woman resident of a Noida housing society, local politician Shrikant Tyagi was nabbed by the Uttar Pradesh Police on Tuesday from Meerut. He, along with his driver and two other close associates, has been sent to 14-day judicial custody by a local court.

Addressing a press conference, Alok Singh, Commissioner of Noida Police, said Tyagi will be proceeded against under the Gangsters Act. Mr. Singh said the self-styled politician wanted to take a flight out of Delhi but because of the police alert decided to sneak into Uttarakhand. "We kept him under surveillance, as he moved from Haridwar and Saharanpur to Baghpat and Meerut," Mr Singh said. The fact that Tyagi was in regular touch with his wife and lawyers helped. The commissioner said that during preliminary interrogation, Tyagi revealed that the MLA sticker of the Assembly Secretariat on his car was provided by the former BJP leader Swami Prasad Maurya.

Shrikant Tyagi after he was arrested by the U.P. police on Tuesday. • PTI

"His charges are being checked." Mr. Singh also said a high-level inquiry committee would also look into how he was provided six gunners by the Ghaziabad police between 2018 and 2020.

Tyagi absconded after a video of last Friday's incident, in which he could be seen heckling a woman resident of Omaxe Grande Society for questioning him over allegedly encroaching on the common area by planting palm trees, was released.

In the video, he could be heard saying in Hindi that if she would touch his plants, he would touch her. On Monday, a bulldozer of the Noida Authority brought down the structure amid cheers.

Consensual sex on a genuine promise of marriage not rape: SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has held that it is not rape if consensual physical relationship was based on a genuine promise of marriage which could not be fulfilled.

A Bench highlighted the distinction between "a false promise to marriage which is given on understanding by the maker that it will be broken and a breach of promise which is made in good faith but subsequently not fulfilled". The court quashed an FIR registered in 2016.

A woman had accused the appellant of rape and cheating. They were in a consensual relationship on the basis of an assurance of marriage given by the man. However, the duo fell apart.

Three years later, the woman filed the complaint against him. The court said the registration of FIR in the case amounted to abuse of the criminal process.

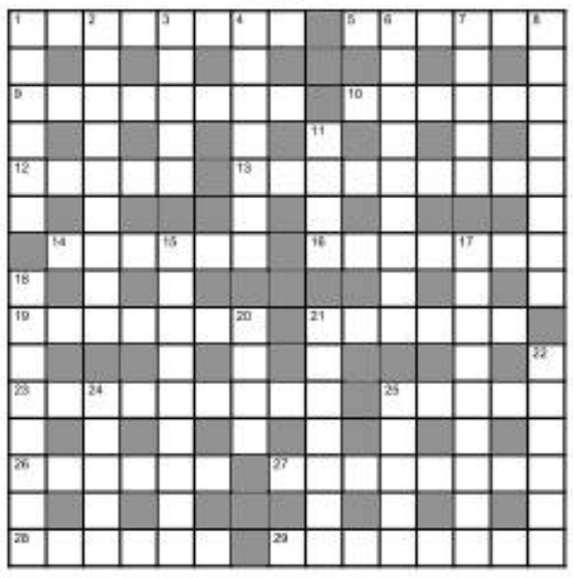
"The parties chose to have physical relationship without marriage for a considerable period of time. For some reason, the parties fell apart. It can happen both before or after marriage," the Supreme Court said.

THE CROSSWORD + 13631

(set by Lightning)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN



Across

1 Everything that exists in a French poem is gripping individual (8)
5 Design by alien for earth, perhaps (6)
9 Specialist doctor at hospital, not new, filled with excitement (8)
10 Division of group of fish partly is methodical to begin with (6)
12 Praise guest contributing to smooth transition (5)
13 Reasoning ability of fashionable cashier curtailed by court (9)
14 Party with couple of unknowns in Andromeda, perhaps (6)
16 King is missing the first holy book causing laughter (7)
19 Camera I lost in country (7)
21 Hasty escape after row in a place of confusion (6)
23 What may be happening to one mark of error pending a correction (9)
25 Searches dissolute person joining society (5)
26 Medium, second perhaps, not left in what one is made of (6)
27 Influence more or less substantial (8)
28 Where a batsman might start to feel nervous (6)
29 Use sling to change grotesque appearance (8)

Down

1 Anxious peacekeepers essentially annoy many in the end (6)
2 Giant tree chopped up to make part of larger unit (9)
3 Avoid press release wasted in the beginning (5)
4 State's commercial venture provided yen (7)
6 Scaled oil rig restricted to a place (9)
7 Innocent citizen leaving Thailand (5)
8 Cook to steam ordinary vegetables (8)
11 It's primary shining throughout a region (4)
15 Lamenting misplaced alliance (9)
17 Left behind outside with depression – one may not get out of it (5,4)
18 Beer introduced in ship by gent – he can be persuasive (8)
20 A police branch is sharp (4)
21 Large explosion – it's supposed to have created one (3,4)
22 Reckon beasts of burden slow at first (6)
24 Where a race car may stop with side spike (5)
25 Primarily rectified a distraught individual's important bones (5)

SUDOKU

1		7	6					
		9		4		7		
		5		8			3	
	2						8	7
		4	7		6	9		
7	5						1	
	4			9		3		
		1		6		8		
					3	1		6

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13630

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	7	5	9	1	3	8	6	4
4	8	6	7	5	2	9	1	3
3	9	1	4	8	6	7	5	2
1	6	2	3	7	5	4	9	8
9	5	8	2	6	4	3	7	1
7	3	4	8	9	1	6	2	5
5	2	3	6	4	9	1	8	7
6	1	7	5	3	8	2	4	9
8	4	9	1	2	7	5	3	6

FAITH

Duties of a king

Narada asks Yudhishthira many questions about how he is functioning as a ruler, and those questions are relevant even today, said Kidambi Narayanan, in a discourse. Narada asks if Yudhishthira's ministers are consulted before he makes a decision. Ministers should preferably be older than the king, for then they will have the requisite experience. It is better if educated men are made ministers. They must be men of good conduct.

Does the kingdom face threats? Obviously, for a country to be protected, the army must be in perfect condition. So Narada asks if the soldiers get their pay on time, if they are provided good food, and if they are paid adequately. Are scholars honoured by him? Are people safe in his kingdom, without any threat to their belongings? Are farmers happy? Are there enough big lakes? Is the water in these lakes of good quality? Agriculture cannot be dependent on rains alone, and so Narada asks if Yudhishthira's kingdom has a proper irrigation system. It is trade that keeps a kingdom prosperous, and so Narada asks if traders and merchants are ethical. Are people being given very harsh punishments? Is the king surrounded by trustworthy people? Does he make sure that there are no internal disturbances in his country?

Narada gives a list of serious flaws, and says that if a king has even a few of these, then he will lose his kingdom. Included in the list are dishonesty, anger, carelessness, atheism, not implementing decisions, always thinking of acquiring wealth, not consulting ministers, opposing things just for the sake of opposing, and consulting those without scruples. If a king has any of these flaws, then his dynasty will come to an end, says Narada. He says a king must eat good food, and take the right medicines when he falls sick.

FBI searches Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate

Bureau is probing whether he took classified records from the White House to his Florida residence

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) searched Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate as part of an investigation into whether he took classified records from the White House to his Florida residence, people familiar with the matter said on Monday. The move represents a dramatic and unprecedented escalation of law enforcement scrutiny of the former President.

Mr. Trump, disclosing the search in a lengthy statement, asserted that agents had opened up a safe at his home, and described their work as an "unannounced raid" that he likened to "prosecutorial misconduct".

The search intensifies the months-long probe into how classified documents ended up in boxes of White House records located at Mar-a-Lago earlier this year. It occurs amid a separate grand jury investigation into efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, and adds to the potential legal peril for Mr. Trump as he lays the groundwork for another run.

Familiar battle lines, forged during a four-year presidency shadowed by FBI and congressional investigations, quickly took shape again Monday night. Mr. Trump and his allies sought to cast the search as a weaponisation of the criminal justice system and a Democratic-driven effort to keep him from winning another term in 2024 – even though the Biden White House said it had no prior knowledge of it, and the current FBI Director, Christopher Wray, was appointed by Mr. Trump and served as a high-ranking official in a Republican-led Justice Department.

On watch: A police car seen outside Donald Trump's residence in Mar-A-Lago, Palm Beach, Florida on Monday. •AFP

'Dark times'

"These are dark times for our Nation, as my beautiful home, Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, is currently under siege, raided, and occupied by a large group of FBI agents," Mr. Trump wrote. "Nothing like this has ever happened to a President of the United States before."

"After working and cooperating with the relevant government agencies, this unannounced raid on my home was not necessary or appropriate," Mr. Trump said in his statement.

Justice Department spokesperson Dena Iverson declined to comment on the search, including about whether Attorney General Merrick Garland had personally authorised it.

Mr. Trump did not elaborate on the basis for the search, but the Justice Department has been investigating the potential mishandling of classified information after the National Archives and Records Administration said it had received from Mar-a-Lago 15 boxes of White House records, including documents containing classified information, earlier this year. The National Archives said Mr. Trump should have turned over that material upon leaving office, and it asked the Justice Department to investigate.

Mr. Trump has previously said that presidential records were turned over "in an ordinary and routine process."

Taiwan holds exercises as China continues drills

Taipei calls Beijing's actions 'a gross violation' of its rights

ANANTH KRISHNAN
BEIJING

Taiwan's military on Tuesday said it had begun holding live-fire exercises, even as China's war games near Taiwan continued for a sixth straight day. China last Thursday began unprecedented live-firing military exercises in six regions surrounding Taiwan, with the drills starting the day after the visit of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to the island.

The PLA Eastern Theater Command on Monday said it continued the drills which were initially announced as ending on Sunday, a move analysts said was aimed at establishing a new normal in China's military presence in the Taiwan Strait. The Theater Command said in a statement Tuesday's drills focused on "joint blockade and joint support operations".

Chinese aircraft have continued to cross the median line of the Taiwan Strait, with Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND) noting it had tracked 45 aircraft and 10 warships on Tuesday, of which 16 aircraft had crossed the median.

Taiwan announced it had begun its own live-fire artillery drills and would hold them again on Thursday.

Taiwan soldiers fire the 155-inch howitzers during a drill on Tuesday. •AFP

Lou Woei-jye, spokesman for the Eighth Army Corps, told reporters the aim was to "practise repulsing an amphibious landing by enemy forces". The drills were not taking place in any of the areas previously announced by the Chinese military for its exercises, he said.

Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu called China's military exercises, which for the first time saw the firing of conventional missiles over Taiwan and the crossing of the median line by a large number of aircraft and warships, as "a gross violation of Taiwan's rights under international law" that "hindered the normal operations of one of the busiest air and shipping routes in the Indo-Pacific region".

"This has had a serious impact on international transportation and trade, and undermined regional peace and security. Taiwan thus strongly condemns China's extremely irresponsible behaviour," he told reporters.

The drills, which Taiwan said had "simulated an attack" on the island, were "a serious provocation" with China "using Speaker Pelosi's visit to Taiwan as a pretext," Mr. Wu added.

"China has openly declared its ownership over the Taiwan Strait," he said. "It aims to influence the international community's freedom of navigation in the waters and airspace of the Taiwan Strait by denying the status quo that it is an international waterway. And after the drills conclude, China may try to routinise its action in an attempt to wreck the long-term status quo across the Taiwan Strait."

Responding to his remarks, China's Foreign Ministry said the "countermeasures taken by China in response to Pelosi's provocative visit to Taiwan are justified, reasonable and lawful". "They are aimed at sending a warning to the provocateurs and punishing the 'Taiwan independence' forces," spokesperson Wang Wenbin said.

Twin explosions kill 15 soldiers in Burkina Faso

Country battles insurgency since 2015

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
OUAGADOUGOU

Two explosions killed 15 soldiers in Burkina Faso on Tuesday, the Army said, the latest in a series of such attacks as the country battles a jihadist insurgency.

The twin blasts using "improvised explosive devices occurred on the road from Bourzanga to Djibo" in the Centre-North region, the Army General Staff said.

"The toll for both incidents is 15 fallen soldiers and one wounded." It was carried out during an escort mission, the statement said.

"One of the vehicles in the convoy, which was carrying troops, hit an explosive device near Namsiguia district in Bam province," it added.

While troops secured the area and tended to the victims, "a second device was remotely detonated, causing many casualties".

Jihadists based in neighbouring Mali began mounting cross-border raids on Burkina Faso and neighbouring Niger in 2015.

In Burkina Faso, violence blamed on jihadists affiliated to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group has killed thousands of people and forced 1.9 million more to flee their homes.

3 Palestinians killed, 69 injured in West Bank raid

A senior commander died, says Israel

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NABLUS

Three people were killed and dozens wounded on Tuesday, the Palestinian Health ministry said, as Israeli forces raided the occupied West Bank city of Nablus.

The Israeli military said a senior militant commander was among the dead.

The latest violence comes two days after deadly fighting between Israel and Islamic Jihad militants in the coastal enclave of Gaza was halted by a truce.

In Nablus, an *AFP* correspondent reported Palestinians trading gunfire with Israeli security forces. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said its medics treated 69 people for gunshot wounds across the Nablus area, at least four of them in critical condition.

"The terrorist Ibrahim al-Nabulsi was killed in the city of Nablus," the Israeli Army said in a statement, adding that "another terrorist" also died.

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid hailed the raid as a "highly successful, precise action without casualties" among the security forces.

Following the raid, the militant group said "the response will fit the crime".

Pak. television station critical of govt. off air

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISLAMABAD

A popular Pakistan television station critical of the current government has been taken off air in much of the country for allegedly airing "seditious" content, the channel said on Tuesday.

Ammad Yousaf, vice president of *ARY News*, said the decision would be challenged in court. A notice seen by *AFP* from the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority to *ARY* said "hateful, seditious and malicious content on your channel raises serious concerns about your *mala fide* intent".

Proof of war crimes in Myanmar: UN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

UN investigators on Tuesday reported mounting evidence of crimes against humanity, including murder, torture and sexual violence, committed in Myanmar since last year's military coup. The United Nations' Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) said women and children were particularly being targeted.

"There are ample indications that since the military takeover in February 2021, crimes have been committed in Myanmar on a scale and in a manner that constitutes a widespread and systematic attack against a civilian population," the investigators said in a statement.

The investigation team warned in its annual report that over the 12 months to the end of June, "the scope of potential international crimes taking place in Myanmar has broadened dramatically".

Singer Olivia Newton-John dies at 73

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK

Olivia Newton-John, the Grammy-winning superstar who reigned on pop, country, adult contemporary and dance charts with such hits as "Physical" and "You're the One That I Want" and won countless hearts as everyone's favorite Sandy in the blockbuster film version of "Grease," has died. She was 73.

Russia launches Iranian satellite

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MOSCOW

A Russian rocket on Tuesday successfully launched an Iranian satellite into orbit.

The Soyuz rocket lifted off as scheduled at 8.52 a.m. Moscow time (0552 GMT) on Tuesday from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. About nine minutes after the launch, it placed the Iranian satellite called Khayyam into orbit. It's named after Omar Khayyam, a Persian scientist. Iran has said the satellite fitted with high-resolution camera will be used for environmental monitoring.

Tehran said no other country will have access to information it gathers and it would be used for civilian purposes only, but there have been allegations that Russia may use it for surveillance of Ukraine.

If it operates successfully, the satellite would give Iran the ability to monitor Israel and other countries in the Middle East. Yuri Borisov, head of Russia's state space corporation Roscosmos, hailed the launch as an "important landmark" in cooperation between Moscow and Tehran.

M.Tech Admission 2022

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Thiruvananthapuram invites Engineering Graduates (GATE & Non GATE) for **placement oriented** two year full time M.Tech Courses in

● VLSI and Embedded Systems ● Cyber Forensics and Information Security

(for Students & Working Professionals)

Placement Oriented learning with Live Projects/ Internship with CDAC R&D Labs and Industry

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Apply Directly to Institute

Last Date : 25th August 2022 Visit Website: http://erdciit.ac.in

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Academic arm of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) (R&D Organization of the Ministry of Electronics and IT), Govt. of India, P.B No.6520, Vellayambalam, Thiruvananthapuram-695033,Kerala, India. Phone: 8547897106, 0471-2723333 Extn 250/317/295/ 04712726106

सी डैक CDAC

CORRIGENDUM AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO. : S&T/CON/2022/01

Tender Notice No. : S&T/Con/2022/01 against Tender No. NFR_C–NJP_ABS-CTC_EPC_01. Corrigendum is already uploaded in www.ireps.gov.in.

Dy. CSTE/CON/
New Jalpaiguri
Northeast Frontier Railway
(Construction Organisation)
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the General Public that my client **B PRATHAP SINGH**, Aged about 56 years, S/o.Sri. Balaji Singh, Aadhaar No: 7608 6879 6218, residing at House Number #713, Near KEB Office, New Extension, Kadugodi Plantation, Bangalore, Karnataka 560067 has recently lost the original Transfer by Sale Certificate vide V.I.No.120, issued by the Office of the Panchath, Kadugodi on 10.08.1978 in favour of his mother Smt. Kamala Bai and same was lost on 05.08.2022 while travelling in Kadugodi, Bangalore and he tried to trace it out same but failed to trace out the same in respect of the property **Residential House Site bearing No. 135**, Old Khatha No.936, Present BBMP Khatha No. 985/936, situated at **Kadugodi village**, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, presently comes under the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, measuring East to West 30 Feet and North to South 50 Feet, totally measuring 1500 Square feet and my client has lodged a complaint on 08-08-2022, Compliant No. 02886807/2022 before Kadugodi Police, Bangalore. If anyone finding the above original title deed is requested to hand over the same to the undersigned within **seven (7) days** from hereof and my client will assure of appropriate reward to such person.

M.R.REVANNA, Advocate
No.264, 1st Floor, Behind Ganesh Temple
Begur Road, Bommanahalli
Bangalore-560068. Ph: 99806 28324

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 11/2022 Date:05-08-2022

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items: Tender Closing Time : 14:00 Hrs.

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty	Tender Due on
1	30221684	Foot Plate Arrangement for UIC Vestibule	777 Nos.	22-08-2022
2	77221025C	Paint anti corrosive bituminous black to specn	28170 Ltr.	16-08-2022
3	29222034A	Set of cylindrical roller bearing for 3 phase	36 Sets	05-09-2022
4	83221082	Pre-Printed Ticket Paper Rolls	26397 Rolls	05-09-2022
5	38221304	Bolster Spring Outer	2415 Nos.	06-09-2022
6	17221142	Controller Assembly Dynamic Brake	18 Nos.	12-09-2022
7	L3225636	Supply and Installation of Natural Light Pipe	200 Nos.	01-09-2022
8	L3225617	Top Rail	400 Nos.	01-09-2022
9	77221024A	Paint aluminium brushing	48260 Ltr.	29-08-2022

Corrigendum to Tender Notice No. 08/2022
For Tender No.33225010 - Due Date changed from 26-07-2022 to 16-08-2022
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/2022/AAD/PRD/SWR/2022-23
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi
S Wr Railways sw_rly SWRRLY southwesternrailway SWRRLY

NOTICE

TITAN COMPANY LIMITED
Registered Office: Golden Enclave, Tower A, Old Aiport Road, Bangalore- 560017

Notice is hereby given that the certificate(s) for the undermentioned securities of the Company has/ have been lost/ misplaced and the holder(s) of the said securities/ applicant(s) has/ have applied to the Company to issue duplicate certificate(s).

Any Person who has a claim in respect of the said securities should lodge such claim with the Company at its Registered Office within 15 days from this date, else the Company will proceed to issue duplicate certificate(s) without further intimation.

Name(s) of holder(s) (and Jt. holder(s), if any)	Folio No.	Kind of Securities and face value	No.of securities	Distinctive number(s)
Ajit Bhargav Prabhavalkar Suhas Ajit Prabhavalkar	TWA0000735	Equity Shares Rs. 1/-	3520	14137801-14141320

Place:Mumbai
Date: 9.8.2022

Name of Holder
Ajit Bhargav Prabhavalkar
Suhas Ajit Prabhavalkar

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान तिरुवनंतपुरम
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
An Autonomous Institution under Ministry of Education, Government of India)
MARUTHAMALA P.O., VITHURA, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, KERALA – 695551, 0471-2778017, 8870

Recruitment of Software Architect (On short term contract basis)

Applications are invited from eligible Indian nationals for the post of **SOFTWARE ARCHITECT** on short term contract basis

No. of Post	One
Pay	₹35,000/- to 40,000/- (consolidated) per month
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate degree in either Science or Engineering. (Bachelors or Master's Degree in Computer Application or Computer Science / Engineering preferred)
Age Limit	Preferably below 40 years
Last date of submission of application	11.08.2022

For detailed advertisement and application please logon to http://www.iisertvm.ac.in/openings
Advt.No.02/22-23 (Acad) dated 10 August 2022 REGISTRAR

Selection of Management Operator for Operation, Maintenance & Management (O&M) of Wayside Amenities at 3 locations (Retender)

Gujarat Tourism

Locations: 1) Virpur, Rajkot, 2) Sikka, Jamnagar & 3) Valthan, Surat

Components: Accommodation Facility, Restaurant, Parking and support infrastructure

RFP Document can be downloaded from https://www.nprocure.com/ & https://www.gujarattourism.com/, 10/08/2022 onwards.

The Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **17/08/2022, 12:30 pm.** For any further details, interested Bidders may contact **Mr. M. S. Joshi** at msjoshi@gujarattourism.com. The last date for submission of the Financial Bid (on n-procure website only) is **24/08/2022 up to 4:00 pm** and Technical Bid is **26/08/2022 up to 4:00 pm.**

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd.
KMML
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking)
(An ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001 & SA 8000 Certified Company)
SANKARAMANGALAM, CHAVARA-691583, KOLLAM, KERALA,INDIA.
Phone : +91-476-2651215 to 2651217, Fax : +91-0476-2680101, 2686721
E-mail: contact@kmml.com, URL www.kmml.com

Competitive Tenders are invited for following. For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal,https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2022_KMML_502239_1	For fabrication and supply of Filter head for Bag Filter
2	2022_KMML_502241_1	For the supply of Plate Inconnel
3	2022_KMML_501851_1	For the supply of PTFE Pipe and Fittings
4	2022_KMML_501547_1	For the supply of Hydrocyclone O-401
5	2022_KMML_501573_1	For the supply of 1152MT of Aluminium Tri Hydrate
6	2022_KMML_501615_1	For the supply of Hot dip Galvanized mild steel ladder type cable tray
Chavara 09.08.2022		sd/-DGM(Mtls) For The Kerala Minerals And Metals Ltd
7	2022_KMML_502113_1	For the work of providing and operating one number of 4 WD Jeep for 24 Hours operation on daily rental basis for a period of Two years in the MS Unit of KMML
Any corrigendums in the future will be notified only in the KMML website and Kerala Govt. e-tender portal.		
Chavara 09.08.2022		sd/- DGM(MS) I/c & HOD(MS) For The Kerala Minerals And Metals Ltd

By Products: Titanium Dioxide, Titanium Tetra Chloride, Nano Titanium, Titanium Sponge, Rutile, Zircon & Sillimanite

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
Regd. Office : PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala
(Corporate Identity Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813)
Website : www.pspcl.in, Contact No. 98461-20691

Tender Enquiry No. 109/Dy.CE/Th.Op/263/O&M/GHTP/2022 Dated: 09/08/2022

Dy. Chief Engineer/ Thermal Operation Circle, GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-Tender for the work : To assist in the work under thermal operation in the Execution of operational jobs of all four units of GHTP Stage-I&II round the clock in three shifts and during general duty hours at GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat.

For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 09/08/2022 from 13:00 hrs onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

GHTP 40/22 76155/12/1041/2021/16225

IN THE COURT OF THE VADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE, BANGALORE
P&SC No. 521 of 2022 (CCH-13)

BETWEEN : 1) **V. J. KITTU** also known as **VARYUR JAGANNATH KITTU,** Son of Late V.K. Jagannath, Aged about 86 years, 2) **KARTHIK V.K.** also known as **KARTHIK VARYUR KITTU,** Son of Sri V. J. Kittu. Aged about 39 years, Both residing at: No. 784, 9th Main Road, 3rd Block, Koramangala, Bangalore- 560 034 ...PETITIONERS
AND : NIL ...RESPONDENTS

PUBLIC NOTICE

WHEREAS the Petitioners above named have made an application under Part VII and IX of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant of Probate with respect to the last Will and Testament dated 03.12.2015 executed by Late J. Nagarathna, daughter of late V.K. Jagannath, who died in Bangalore on 23.11.2021. Be it known that no Caveat has been lodged and the aforesaid petition is posted for hearing on **14.09.2022 at 11.00 A.M.** Any person/s having objection to the grant of Probate may appear on the given date and raise their objections, failing which the matter will proceed in accordance with law.

SCHEDULE
IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the residential house standing on site bearing No. 776, MIG I Phase, Kengeri Satellite Town, presently having BBMP Khata bearing PID No. 281/776, totally measuring 3,250 square feet (East to West 65-0 Feet & North to South 50-0 Feet). The residential house and the immovable property are bounded on East by: Site No. 763; West by: Road; North by: House No. 777; South by: House No. 775.

MOVABLE PROPERTIES

1. Fixed Deposits, Savings Bank Accounts & Shares:

(i) Jointly held Fixed Deposit Account bearing Number 34006/61887/2 at Malleshwaram Co-Operative Bank, Malleshwaram Branch **(ii)** Fixed Deposit Account bearing Number 34007/61888/2 at Malleshwaram Co-Operative Bank, Malleshwaram Branch **(iii)** Fixed Deposit Account bearing Number 1485004000004265 at Indian Overseas Bank, Koramangala Branch **(iv)** Fixed Deposit Account bearing Number 1485004000004266 at Indian Overseas Bank, Koramangala Branch **(v)** Fixed Deposit Account bearing Number 4041/178/1 at National Co-Operative Bank, Koramangala Branch **(vi)** Fixed Deposit Receipt bearing Number 4047/150/1 at National Co-Operative Bank, Koramangala Branch **(vii)** Savings Bank Account bearing number 1953 at Malleshwaram Co-Operative Bank, Malleshwaram Branch **(viii)** Jointly held Savings Bank Account bearing number 58310100012254 along with safe deposit locker, at Bank of Baroda, Kengeri Branch (erstwhile Vijaya Bank) **(ix)** Savings Bank Account bearing number 148501000004527 at Indian Overseas Bank, Koramangala Branch **(x)** 100 shares held in the Demat account bearing No. M 5004, at Malleshwaram Co-Operative Bank, Malleshwaram Branch.

2. Jewellery: (i) One Lakshmi Coin Gold Chain **(ii)** One Pair Red Stone Bangle **(iii)** One Coral Gold Chain **(iv)** One Pair Plain Gold Bangle **(v)** One Ruby Gold Chain **(vi)** 2 Pair Earrings.

Given under my hand and seal of this court on 2nd August, 2022.

By order of the Court, Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru

Advocate for Petitioners
VNA LAW OFFICES, Advocates
No. 865, 1st Main Road,
Kengeri Satellite Town, Bengaluru – 560060

BEFORE THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU
In The Matter of The Companies Act, 1956 And In The Matter of MPPL Renewable Energy Limited Company Petition No 58 of 2014

Between: N L Energy and Climate Change, NL Agency Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands Having its office at Crasselaan 15, 3521 BJ Utrecht PO Box 8242, RE Utrecht, The Netherlands ...Petitioner

And: MPPL Renewable Energy Private Limited, No 29, 1st Floor, Malks Building Bowring Hospital Road Shivajinagar, Bengaluru - 560 001 ...Respondent

Advertisement of Petition

Notice is hereby given that a petition under Section 433 and 434 of the Companies Act, 1956 seeking winding up of the above named Respondent Company for its inability to pay its debts was presented by the Petitioner on 13.03.2014 and the said petition was heard before the Hon'ble High Court.

Any person, creditor, contributory desirous of supporting/ opposing the petition should send to the Petitioner's advocate, notice of his intention, signed by him or his advocate, with his name and address, so as to reach the Petitioner's advocate not later than 5 days before the date fixed for the hearing of the petition ie **15.09.2022** and appear before the Court in person or through his advocate. A copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges for the same. Any affidavit intended to be used in the opposition to the petition should be filed in Court, and a copy served on the Petitioner or his Advocate, not less than 5 days before the date fixed for hearing.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, that is the 14th day of July, 2022.

By Order of the Court, Asst. Registrar

-Sd- Khaitan & Co LLP
Advocates for Petitioner
Embassy Quest, 3rd Floor 45/1,
Magrath Road Bengaluru 560 025
P: +91 98450 53985
E: Tamarra.sequeira@khaitanco.com

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್‌ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ

ಗ್ರಾ.ಕು.ನೀ. ಮತ್ತು ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ, ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ – 571313
Phone No: 08226-226054, E-mail:eerdwsd.chn@gmail.com

ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹಿರಿಯ ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಕ (Sr. Analyst) ಹುದ್ದೆಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು ಮತ್ತು ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ರವರಿಂದ ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರಿನ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಾಗಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ಹಿರಿಯ ವಿಶ್ಲೇಷಕ (Sr. Analyst) ಹುದ್ದೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಿತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಅಸಕ್ತ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ದಿನಾಂಕ 06–08–2022 ರಿಂದ 17–08–2022ರೊಳಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಪಟ್ಟ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ವಿಭಾಗ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ಸ್ವಯಂ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು.

ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಹತೆ : M.Sc in Chemistry/ Biochemistry/ Microbiology/ Environmental Science/ Biotechnology/ B.E.in Environmental With not less than 60% of Marks From Recognized University (Not Distance Education) Relaxation from 60% to 50% for those who have experience in Water Quality Testing for more than 5 Years.

ಅಗತ್ಯ ಸೇವಾ ಅನುಭವ : 3 ವರ್ಷ ನೀರಿನ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟ ಪರೀಕ್ಷಾ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರಬೇಕು ಹಾಗೂ NABL ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರ ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ಮೊದಲ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ಮತ್ತು MS Office ಬಳಕೆಮಾಡುವ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರಬೇಕು.

ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನ ಮಿತಿ : 25ವರ್ಷ, **ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನ ಮಿತಿ** : 45ವರ್ಷ

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್,
ಗ್ರಾ.ಕು.ನೀ & ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗ,
ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಚಾಮರಾಜನಗರ

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳು: ಚಾಗರಿ:236:2022–23

IN BRIEF

Natco Pharma net profit jumps to ₹320 crore

HYDERABAD

Natco Pharma has posted a consolidated net profit of ₹320 crore for the quarter ended June, a manifold increase from ₹75 crore in the year-earlier period. The company has declared an interim dividend of ₹3.50 per equity share (of ₹2 each) for financial year 2022-23.

Granules net profit rises 6% on higher revenue

HYDERABAD

Granules India reported consolidated net profit increased 6% to ₹128 crore in the quarter ended June, even as growth across geographies and segments pushed up revenue from operations 20% to ₹1,020 crore. The drugmaker has approved a buy-back of 62.50 lakh equity shares at a price of ₹400 each for an aggregate maximum amount of ₹250 crore.

VST Q1 net slides 58% on rise in raw material costs

BENGALURU

Farm equipment manufacturer VST Tillers Tractors on Tuesday said net profit for the first quarter fell 58% to ₹10.05 crore, compared with ₹24.01 crore a year earlier. Revenue rose 21.9% to ₹235.98 crore from ₹193.60 crore. Rising raw material costs and capex investments impacted the financials, VST said.

Shriram Transport Finance raises FD rates

CHENNAI

Shriram Transport Finance Co. Ltd. has raised fixed deposit interest rates by 25 to 50 basis points across different tenors effective Wednesday. The revised interest rates apply to tenors between 12 and 60 months (if deposits are made through regular channels) and range from 6.75% to 8.75%, the company said in a statement.

'PSU health insurance losses came to ₹26,364 cr. in 5 years'

CAG says higher claims in group policies is reason, flags non-compliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

All four public sector insurers incurred losses of ₹26,364 crore in the health insurance portfolio for the last five years due to higher claims in group policies, the CAG said in an audit report tabled in Parliament recently.

"The losses of the health insurance business of PSU insurers either wiped out/decreased the profits of other lines of business or increased the overall losses," the CAG said.

The aggregate loss of the four public sector insurers – New India Assurance Co., United India Insurance Co., Oriental Insurance Co. and National Insurance Co. – was ₹26,364 crore during 2016-17 to 2020-21. PSU insurers' market share in the health insurance business had also been declining continuously vis-a-vis standalone health insurers and private insurers, the report observed.

Not in line: PSU insurers' combined ratio of group health insurance exceeded norms, the CAG says. •GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said in the report that the Finance Ministry laid down (in September 2012/May 2013) guidelines for the underwriting of group policies as per which the combined ratio of standalone group policies shall not exceed 95% and for group policies involving cross-subsidy, the combined ratio shall not exceed 100%.

"Audit noticed that the Ministry guidelines were not complied with by the PSU insurers and the combined ratio of group health insurance segment as reported by PSU insurers ranged from 125-165%," it said.

On lapses in claims, the CAG said IT systems in PSU insurers lacked appropriate validation controls, undermining smooth functioning.

Bharti to start 5G services in August: MD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Telecom operator Bharti Airtel will start rolling out 5G services this month and cover all towns and key rural areas of the country by March 2024, a senior company official said.

Bharti Airtel MD and CEO Gopal Vittal also said that the price of mobile services in India was very low and needed to go up.

"We intend to launch 5G starting August and extend to a pan-India roll-out very soon. By March 2024, we believe we will be able to cover every town, and key rural areas as well, with 5G.

"In fact, detailed network roll-out plans for 5,000 towns in India are in place," Mr. Vittal said during the firm's earnings call.

Clients' tech spending in good shape: Infosys CEO

'See continued strength in U.S., Europe'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU

India's second-largest IT services company Infosys is 'comfortable' with the higher revenue growth guidance of 14-16% it gave for the full fiscal, as global IT spends are in 'good shape,' CEO Salil Parekh said on Tuesday.

Salil Parekh

Mr. Parekh told PTI that Infosys saw continued strength in the U.S. and European markets, though it was keeping a close watch on the macroeconomic environment as 'these are things one has to monitor on a constant basis.'

The optimistic commentary comes amid talks that the global economy may be facing an increased risk of recession. Many analysts have flagged concerns over higher-than-expected inflation, and some large global tech firms are pulling back on aggressive hiring plans due to concerns about a looming slowdown. He asserted global IT spending was in a good shape and clients' digital focus was quite strong.

That, and cost efficiency and automation, were acting as twin engines. he said.

MRF Q1 net skids 30% to ₹112 cr. as input costs soar

Company to raise ₹100 crore via NCDs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Tyre major MRF Ltd. has reported a more than 30% drop in standalone net profit for the first quarter to ₹112 crore following a sharp increase in raw material costs.

Revenue from operations jumped 36% to ₹5,599 crore while other income contracted to ₹34 crore from ₹92 crore, the firm said.

Total expenditure rose 37% to ₹5,481 crore, of which cost of raw materials accounted for ₹4,043 crore, growing 26%.

Other expenses rose to ₹918 crore (₹723 crore).

Subsidy from States

Revenue from operations included a subsidy of ₹7.12 crore received from State governments. MRF said the economic crisis in Sri Lanka had led to currency devaluation resulting in remeasurement loss of of ₹2.60 crore on consolidation of its wholly owned subsidiary MRF Lanka Pvt. Ltd.

On Tuesday, the board approved raising of funds via the issuance of non-convertible debentures (NCD) on private placement basis aggregating to ₹100 crore in one or more tranches.

Manali Petro Q1 net halves on input costs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Manali Petrochemicals Ltd. (MPL) reported standalone net profit for the first quarter halved to ₹37 crore on an increase in raw material prices and higher imports.

Revenue from operations rose 7.5% to ₹301 crore. Total expenditure jumped 45% to ₹257 crore while raw material cost increased 38% to ₹227 crore, MPL said.

"Besides lower sales volume, the prices have been witnessing a downtrend, the stage for which was set towards the end of the preceding quarter," Ravi, MD, said. He also said input costs were rising on global conditions, mainly on the Russia-Ukraine stand-off and Chinese lockdowns.

Currently in investment mode, India to be profitable soon: Uber

Company wants 'outcome-focussed regulation' from Centre

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
SYDNEY

Cab aggregator Uber Technologies Inc. expects India to be among its profitable markets soon and is looking to add more modes of transport on the platform amid efforts to deal with service quality issues such as driver cancellations, according to a senior company official.

The company is seeking 'outcome-focussed regulation' from the government, including reviewing some State-specific rules such as need for printers and physical meters in taxis.

Social security code

It is also advocating the speedy implementation of the code on social security as well as allowing two-wheelers and three-wheelers on platforms such as Uber across the country.

Pradeep Parameswaran

"India is a long term investment market for us," Pradeep Parameswaran, Regional General Manager, Asia Pacific, told reporters during an interaction at the company's office here.

"We are nearly 1,000 engineers in India building for the world. We have a large business presence and have a very competitive market position against a pretty fierce local competitor."

He said that while the company was still in an investment mode, "our unit economics has improved dramatically in the last few quarters. So, I feel very, very good about where we are on that journey".

"And, over time, I have no doubt India will be a high-growth market which will also be profitable. It's a steady march. I don't have an exact timeline on when we will be profitable in India. But I'd say it's not that far away," Mr. Parameswaran added.

(The writer was in Australia at the invitation of Uber)

E.I.D. Parry turns profit on volumes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

E.I.D. Parry (India) Ltd. has posted a standalone net profit of ₹13 crore for the first quarter, against a loss of ₹33 crore in the year-earlier period on better volumes and realisation in the sugar, power and distillery units. Revenue from operations rose 60% to ₹722 crore. Total expenses jumped from ₹506 crore to ₹766 crore, the firm said in a regulatory filing.

E.I.D. Parry crushed 2.69 lakh tonnes (1.46 lakh tonnes) of sugarcane. Higher power tariff helped in better profitability in the power segment, said S. Suresh, MD. Consolidated sugar operations reported narrowing of operating loss to ₹9 crore (₹52 crore).

SPORT

Serena hints at hanging up her racquet

Wants to 'evolve away' from the game towards other things important to her

Changing priorities: Serena wants to focus on being a mother, her spiritual goals and discover a different version of herself. •AFP

TENNIS

REUTERS
NEW YORK

Serena Williams said on Tuesday that she is "evolving away from tennis" as she hinted at retiring from the sport she dominated for much of her career with 23 singles Grand Slam titles.

Elusive 24th crown

The 41-year-old won her last Grand Slam crown in 2017 and has been chasing an elusive 24th crown that will draw her level with Margaret Court who holds the record for most Majors.

"I have never liked the word retirement," Williams wrote in a *Vogue* article. "It doesn't feel like a modern word to me.

"Maybe the best word to describe what I'm up to is evolution. I'm here to tell you that I'm evolving away from tennis, toward other things that are important to me.

"A few years ago I quietly started Serena Ventures, a venture capital firm. Soon after that, I started a family. I want to grow that family."

Countdown begins

"That time is always hard when you love something so much. My goodness do I enjoy tennis. But now, the countdown has begun.

"I have to focus on being a mom, my spiritual goals and finally discovering a different, but just exciting Serena. I'm gonna relish these next few weeks."

Rudi Koertzen killed in road accident

Former umpire officiated in 397 international games

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CAPE TOWN

Former South African international umpire Rudi Koertzen was killed in a car crash on Tuesday morning. He was 73. He is survived by his wife and four children.

One of the most respected umpires in world cricket from the late 1990s till 2010, Koertzen officiated in nearly 400 international games.

"The world-famous cricket umpire, Rudi Koertzen, and three other people were killed in a head-on collision near Riversdale on Tuesday morning.

"The 73-year-old Koertzen from Despatch in Nelson Mandela Bay was on his way back home from Cape Town after a golf weekend," Algoa FM News reported.

Unique style: Koertzen was known for his characteristic way to signal a dismissal. •AP

Koertzen was inducted into the ICC's Elite Panel in 2002 and was a member for eight years.

During his tenure, he officiated as on-field and TV umpire in as 397 games, including 128 Tests, a record 250 ODIs, and 19 T20Is.

He had his share of controversies too, including continuing with the 2007 ODI World Cup final between Sri Lanka and Australia in near darkness due to a wrong interpretation of rules.

This forced the ICC to not give him any assignment during the inaugural World T20, held in 2007.

BCCI taking First-Class cricket more seriously is good news for the game

The next step is to ensure that the country's top players participate in the Ranji and Duleep Trophies when available

BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

When I was growing up, there was something sacred about the National championships.

My father took me to my first Ranji Trophy match, and although he is no longer with us, the memory lingers at Ranji games today. Especially of the times I held his hand as we walked into the ground. Posthumous bonding you might call it.

That match was at the Central College grounds – the Karnataka Cricket Association Stadium was yet to be built – and we sat in the temporary stands. There was a lot of action off the field too, much of it enjoyable, some of it avoidable, but all of it inevitable in a near-packed stadium.

Natural follow-up

The Duleep Trophy felt like the natural follow-up since the Ranji was played zone-wise with first one, and later two teams making it to the knockout. I remember cheering on Central Zone in the final when, thanks to a genius named Salim Durrani, they beat West to win the title.

The match was scheduled to be played in Bengaluru because officials thought that South and West would be the teams playing. Durrani ruined their plans. But there was a crowd still, most of us cheering for Central because of Durrani. He didn't disappoint, claiming nine wickets and scoring a near-century in the second innings to see his side home against a powerful West Zone.

By restoring the Duleep Trophy to its original format as a zonal tournament, the Board of Control for Cricket in India has woken up to the folly, nay, silliness of their ways.

Random teams named after the colours of the rainbow battling it out, as in recent years, is no way to honour a player. Duleep was an Indian who never played for India (he was advised not to by his uncle Ranji who wanted the younger man to play for England like he himself had done), but was an important figure in the game.

It is ironic that India's two top domestic first-class tournaments are named after cricketers who didn't play for India, while a third, the Irani Cup honours an official of the BCCI, and a benefactor of the game.

The decision to restore the significance of first class cricket by the BCCI has to be lauded because the longer game was becoming subservient to the shorter formats. With India discovering Test players in their T20 tournaments like the IPL – Jasprit Bumrah being the best example – the first class game needed to be given greater importance if it were not to be flattened to irrelevancy.

Most men (and some women) of my age have fond childhood memories of the First Class game in India. The atmosphere was relaxed. Players spent time with fans, and over the course of the match often kept a running conversation going with them. It was the sort of relationship the IPL envisaged, but never managed to sustain.

Playing at neutral venues in recent years severed that connect, but if the matches are played on a home-and-away basis, it could return. This was how the tournament was played till recently, and it is the best way. I can't imagine my father taking me to a match in Bengaluru that didn't involve Karnataka.

Sport is not just about winning and losing; it is about creating lasting memories, about measuring one's life with something more than coffee spoons.

Spectator comfort

Frankly, for that to happen, the BCCI must focus on spectator comfort at our stadiums. The Ranji has to be marketed as an outing for the family, which means that seats must be comfortable, food readily available, toilets clean and perhaps even side attractions like museums, libraries, merchandising stores available. Today's audiences are not like those of the past, willing to put up with any inconvenience. They have other options.

The decision to have separate tournaments for the Elite and Plate divisions (with promotions and relegations) makes sense when you consider the huge disparity in the ability of the teams. A debutant making a triple hundred against Mizoram and Jharkhand running up a lead of over 1000 runs against Nagaland last season were indications enough.

The changes will not see a rush for Ranji tickets. But they indicate that the BCCI, long criticised for its focus on money and television deals, is suggesting that it takes its premier first class tournaments seriously.

The next step is to ensure that the country's top players participate in the Ranji and Duleep Trophies when available. That's possible now that a system of rotation for international matches is in place. It has long seemed incongruous to me that the country's most successful batter Sachin Tendulkar never played the most successful bowler Anil Kumble in a Ranji match.

My father would have loved the new First-Class season for what it promises. Only this time he would need to hold my hand instead.

India 2 clinches bronze; Uzbekistan takes gold ahead of Armenia

The quartet of Gukesh, Nihal, Praggnanandhaa and Raunak power the host to the podium; India 1 holds top-seeded USA to finish fourth

Kings and warriors: Uzbekistan emerged on top with a brilliant show while India 2 finished third at the 44th Chess Olympiad on Tuesday. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

RAKESH RAO
MAMALLAPURAM

Putting aside the disappointment of missing a chance to have a go at the gold medal, India 2 climbed the podium with a resounding 3-1 victory over Germany in the 11th and final round of the Chess Olympiad here on Tuesday.

With Nihal Sarin and Raunak Sadhwani striking with white and D. Gukesh and R. Praggnanandhaa gaining a draw with black, India 2 emerged as the only team on 18 points, one behind champion Uzbekistan and runner-up Armenia.

The young combination of Uzbekistan defeated Netherlands 2.5-1.5 while joint-overnight leader Armenia scored an identical victory over Spain.

For India, this was the second medal in the Open section of the Olympiad, to go with the one from the 2014 edition.

India 1 also came up with a fine performance to hold top seed USA 2-2. But this result left the teams on 17 points and away from the podium. India 1 finished fourth and USA, fifth. India 3, seeded 16, drew with Kazakhstan to finish a distant 31st.

Reward for brilliance

Individual gold medals for D. Gukesh and Nihal Sarin, silver to Arjun Erigiasi and bronze to R. Praggnanandhaa underlined the phenomenal display of this teen-quartet in the premier competition.

Important results (11th round, with match-points):

Open: Germany (15) lost to India 2 (18) 1-3 (Vincent Keymer drew with D. Gukesh; Matthias Bluebaum lost to Nihal Sarin; Rasmus Svane drew with R. Praggnanandhaa; Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu lost to Raunak Sadhwani).

India 1 (17) drew with USA (17) 2-2 (P. Harikrishna drew with Caruana Fabiano; Vidit Gujrathi drew with Wesley So; Arjun Erigaisi bt Leinier Dominguez Perez; S.L. Narayanan lost to Sam Shankland).

Kazakhstan (15) drew with India 3 (14) 2-2 (Rinat Jumabayev bt Surya Shekhar Ganguly; Alisher Sulemenov drew with S.P. Sethuraman; Arystanbek Urzayev lost to M. Karthikeyan; Kazybek Norgerbek drew with Abhimanyu Puranik).

Armenia (19) bt Spain (15) 2.5-1.5; Uzbekistan (19) bt Netherlands (15) 2.5-1.5; Moldova (17) bt England (15) 2.5-1.5; Azerbaijan (16) bt Serbia (15) 2.5-1.5.

The standings: 1-2. Uzbekistan, Armenia; 3. India 2; 4-6. India 1, USA and Moldova; 31. India 3.

Individual prizes: Board 1: 1. D. Gukesh (Ind 2), 2. Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb), Magnus Carlsen (Nor).

Board 2: 1. Nihal Sarin (Ind 2), 2. Nikolaos Theodorou (Gre), 3. Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb);

Board 3: 1. David Howell (Eng), 2. Arjun Erigaisi (Ind 1), 3. R. Praggnanandhaa (Ind 2).

Board 4: 1. Jakhongir Vakhidov (Uzb), 2. Paulius Pultinevicius (Ltu), 3. Jaime Santos Latasa (Esp).

Reserve: 1. Mateusz Bartel (Pol), 2. Robert Hovhannisyan (Arm), 3. Volodymyr Onyshchuk (Ukr).

Bronze for India 1 after disappointing loss to USA

Ukraine's 3-1 victory over Poland gives it gold; India 2 finishes eighth and India 3 17th

RAKESH RAO
MAMALLAPURAM

A heart-breaking 1-3 defeat to USA robbed India 1 of the gold medal, but a historic-first bronze medal did manage to bring back the smiles.

A long period of suspense that preceded the final list of medallists was quite an agonizing one but proved worth it.

Tops three-way tie

India topped the three-way tie for the bronze medal at 17 match-points after aggregating 396,5 tie-breaking points, ahead of USA's 390 and Kazakhstan's 352.

The law of averages finally caught up with Tania Sachdev and Bhakti Kulkarni, the team's strike-force on the lower boards, as they lost for the first time.

That meant, the draws from K. Humpy and R. Vaishali on the top two boards did not help India's cause. India 2 finished eighth and India 3 occupied the 17th spot. Overnight leaders Ukraine and Georgia finished on 18 points following 11th round victories. Ukraine's 3-1 victory over a tough Poland gave it the gold.

Historic: India won a medal for the first time at the Women's Olympiad. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Georgia kept pace by beating Azerbaijan 3-1 and Ukraine's tie-break count of 413.50 – as against Georgia's 392 – proved decisive.

India's first medal since making its debut in the women's Olympiad in 1978, came on a day when R. Vaishali, Tania and Divya Deshmukh collected bronze medals for their performances.

The results (11th round, with match-points): Women: India 1 (17) lost to USA (17) 1-3 (K. Humpy drew with Tokhirjonova Gulrukhbegim; R. Vaishali drew with Irina Krush; Tania Sachdev lost to Carissa Yip; Bhakti Kulkarni lost to Tatev Abrahamyan).

Kazakhstan (17) bt India 3 (15) 2.5-1.5 (Zhansaya Abdumalik bt Eesha Karavade; Bibisara Assaubayeva bt P. V. Nandhidhaa; Xeniya Balabayeva drew with Varshini Sahithi; Guliskhan Nakhbayeva lost to B. Pratyusha).

Slovakia (16) drew with India 2 (16) 2-2 (Zuzana Borosova drew with Vantika Agrawal; Eva Repkova bt Padmini Rout; Zuzana Hagarova drew with Mary Ann Gomes; Svetlana Sucikova lost to Divya Deshmukh).

Ukraine (18) bt Poland (16) 3-1: Azerbaijan (16) lost to Georgia (18) 1-3.

Final standings: 1-2. Ukraine, Georgia, 3-5. India 1, USA, 5. Kazakhstan, 8. India 2, 17. India 3.

Individual prizes: Board 1: 1. Pia Cramling (Swe), 2. Eline Roebers (Ned), 3. Abdumalik Zhansaya (Kaz); **Board 2:** 1. Nino Batsiashvili (Geo), 2. Anna Muzychuk (Ukr), 3. Khanim Balajayeva (Aze).

Board 3: 1. Oliwia Kiolbasa (Pol) 2. Anna Ushenina (Ukr), 3. R. Vaishali (Ind 1).

Board 4: 1. Bat-Erdene Mmungunzul (Mon), 2. Maria Malicka (Pol), 3. Tania Sachdev (Ind 1).

Reserve: 1. Jana Schnieder (Ger), 2. Ulviyya Fataliyeva (Aze), 3. Divya Deshmukh (Ind 2).

All in all, a commendable show

VISWANATHAN ANAND

After all the drama involving India 2 yesterday, I was hoping at least the women's team, which had stayed relatively unscathed, and was leading, would have a good day. But, of all days, the bad day had to come today, when any damage could no longer be repaired.

Unfortunate

Humpy made a very imaginative sacrifice but, unfortunately, it seems the precision required after that was quite high. Tania's opening just didn't work out. Also, Bhakti played a plan that turned out quite flawed.

And so, very soon, we were in very, very big trouble. Once Ukraine dispatched Poland, in style, the championship went out of our reach. A first bronze from the women's section is still very special.

I really commend Ramesh and all India 2 players for pulling themselves together. In fact, I met some of them yesterday evening, and they had kind of taken it on the chin. They deserved gold, but to take the bronze with a commanding last-round victory was commendable.

Well done, Arjun!

As for India 1, I would like to single out Arjun's (Erigaisi) performance. He played all 11 rounds and his score improved dramatically in the last few rounds with a couple of wins.

I think no one will dispute that Gukesh's was 'the performance' of the Olympiad. Eight points from eight rounds is a world record and his gold on Board 1 is a really colossal achievement.

This was a high-scoring Olympiad where the top boards were scoring heavily.

Vaishali's bronze on Board 3, Tania's bronze on Board 4 and Divya's bronze as a reserve, are all decent performances.

The lynchpin

Tania was the lynchpin of the team, while Humpy and Harika were steady, holding down the top two boards.

Tanya was the one scoring often and Bhakti also contributed some crucial wins. It was very sad that they both lost today.

I'm also very proud of Nihal, for his gold on Board 2. And I think these individual golds make up a little bit for the team's disappointment. As I said before, Arjun also had a phenomenal performance even though he didn't win a team medal.

Meanwhile, Arjun and Gukesh crossed 2700 in live ratings. It's amazing every one of our guys won something, because Arjun won silver and Praggnanandhaa, a bronze, and that's just cool!

Brave women from Ukraine put a smile on world's face

A remarkable triumph for a country devastated by ongoing war

The Queens: Ukraine showed grit to win the battle for the top spot. • R. RAVINDRAN

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
MAMALLAPURAM

Chess, simply put, is a war fought on 64 squares. But it doesn't hurt you. A real war does.

No country in the world at the moment could speak more about the horrors of a war than Ukraine, which has been resisting the Russian invasion for more than five months. Ukraine may be quite some way off from a victory - or peace - but it scored a significant victory here on Tuesday. It won the women's Chess Olympiad.

It ought to be one of the most heart-warming stories to emerge from international sport of late. India was actually the favourite to win the title, but the country should not grudge these brave women from Ukraine. Anna Ushenina, the Muzychuk sisters Mariya and Anna, Nataliya Buksa and Yuliya Osmak have given their country something to celebrate in these heart-rending times.

This could probably be the happiest moment for Ukraine since the Russo-Ukrainian war started on February 24. In May, Ukraine's rap group Kalush Orchestra had won the Eurovision Song Contest, but that was also because of some goodwill from the voting viewers.

In sport, however, no amount of goodwill will win you the gold. You need talent, grit, determination and a will to fight to emerge as the champion. The five Ukrainian women showed those qualities in ample measure over the last fortnight.

They may have even made up for the disappointment of the sports fans back home when Ukraine's football team narrowly missed out on the qualification for this year's World Cup, that too by an own goal in the playoff against Wales. They had come here as the second seed, behind the host.

They finished first on account of the 3-1 victory against Poland in the final round. A win by Ushenina, who became the first Ukrainian woman to win the World championship in 2012, against the in-form Oliwia Kiolbasa proved decisive. The Pole had been in great form, having won all her first nine games and then drew the 10th.

Ushenina hails from Kharkiv, which remains one of the worst cities affected by the war. The battle of Kharkiv has devastated the city.

The war has certainly affected chess in Ukraine. And it was a struggle for the Ukraine chess players - women and men - to reach Chennai for the Olympiad. The Muzychuk sisters had to flee to the safety of Spain from Lviv.

The men's team's captain Oleksandr Sulypa even spent a couple of months in territorial defence. Natalia Zhukova, who was a teammate of Ushenina when Ukraine won the Women's Chess Olympiad for the first time in 2006, is helping the people as the council member of Odessa. This remarkable win must put a smile on Zhukova and the entire Ukraine's face. Their joy will be shared by most of the world.

Exhilarating stuff

Acrobatic: Flying piano artist Janaya from New Zealand and others pull out all stops during the cultural programme to mark Chess Olympiad's closing ceremony. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM & R. RAVINDRAN

Gold for Gukesh and Nihal; silver for Arjun

India 1 claims Gaprindashvili Cup for the first time

Nihal. • VELANKANNI RAJ

Gukesh. • VELANKANNI RAJ

Arjun. • VELANKANNI RAJ

Praggnanandhaa. • VELANKANNI RAJ

Tania. • VELANKANNI RAJ

Vaishali. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

RAKESH RAO
MAMALLAPURAM

It rained medals for India following its best ever Chess Olympiad campaign here.

Though a bronze in each section – Open and women – was a first, India 1 claimed the Gaprindashvili Cup – a symbol of combined supremacy of a team in both sections.

Named after former Soviet and Georgian World champion Nona Gaprindashvili – the first woman to become a Grandmaster – the honour highlights India's growing chess strength. India 1 finished ahead of close contenders USA, India 2, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

India 1 women started the day as a leader, missed the gold and finished with a bronze. India 2 men let slip a gold-winning opportunity following Tuesday's heartbreaking draw with eventual champion Uzbekistan and took a bronze.

But soon this muted joy turned into a more expressed celebration when the Board prizes were announced.

The host's share was a never-before haul of two gold, a silver and four bronze medals on the back of some sterling individual performances. India's combined tally of individual medals was 10 before this unprecedented scoop.

Fittingly, D. Gukesh and Nihal Sarin won gold medals for their displays on Board 1 and Board 2. Gukesh, winner of the first eight rounds, became the first Indian to earn the honour. Nihal emulated Dibyendu Barua's effort in the 1990 Novi Sad Olympiad.

Arjun Erigaisi, who like Gukesh crossed 2700 in live ratings in the competition, took the silver on Board 3 where the bronze went to R. Praggnanandhaa.

With this teen quartet getting duly rewarded for their phenomenal performances, that too, on debut, this served as a cushion in dealing with the disappointment of their teams not finishing higher on the podium.

R. Vaishali and Tania Sachdev, key players on Board 3 and Board 4 for India 1 on way to a long-awaited team medal, along with Divya Deshmukh, a reserve for India 2, collected bronze for their consistent showing.

For the record, Gukesh scored 9 points from 11 rounds while performing at a whopping 2867 rating. Nihal (7.5/10, 2774), Praggnanandhaa (6.5/9, 2767), Arjun (8.5/11, 2767), Vaishali (7.5/11, 2452), Tania (8/11, 2441) and Divya (7/9 2298) also played way above their rating.

I need to forget this achievement, says Sable

3000m steeplechase silver medallist already has his sights set on more glory and wants to start from scratch

Tight finish: Sable runs Kenya's Kibiwot close in the men's 3000m steeplechase final. • AFP

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

Avinash Sable wants to forget the Commonwealth Games silver quickly. "I need to forget this achievement soon," the 3000m steeplechase medallist tells *The Hindu*, on his return from Birmingham.

"I have to restart training as if I have not achieved anything. I do feel happy. But the main focus is to not think that I have done something extraordinary. I remember my losses and learn from them. I forget my victories."

This mentality is perhaps what helped Sable overcome the disappointment of having finished 11th at the World Championships.

In what was the slowest steeplechase final in World Championships history, he clocked 8:31.75s, his worst time since October 2019. In Birmingham, he went 8:11.20s and bettered his best performance for the ninth time.

"It was a very difficult time," Sable says of the period after the Worlds. "I had never experienced such a slow race in my life. I had done a lot of speed workout and still I could do nothing. I finished 11th and I thought, 'If I couldn't achieve anything with so much good practice, maybe I won't achieve anything ever'."

But the despondency didn't last long. Belief in his methods soon returned, enough to tell the 27-year-old that he could break the Kenyan hegemony (all 18 medals in men's steeplechase since 1998).

"When I was in the U.S, I used to practise with Kenyan athletes as an equal. I thought, 'If I can practise with them, why can't I compete?' So, I told myself that a medal was the target, whichever colour.

Slight mistake

"But once there, I wanted to win gold. Maybe there was a slight mistake in where I tried to take off. I still had a lot of energy left but I couldn't beat him (Abraham Kibiwot)."

The difference was just five hundredths of a second. One of the endearing images from CWG will be of Sable, with the whole crowd behind him, nearly beating Kibiwot. But Sable, like always, wants to look at the bigger picture.

"If you keep thinking about the CWG and Asian levels, you cannot win at the Worlds," he says. "When I was young, all I wanted in the army was a promotion as *Havaldar*. Then, I wanted to do well in cross country running. That's all.

"But when I moved from cross country to steeplechase, that's when things changed. I got a promotion also. I then told myself: Fight for the things that you won't get easily, that no Indian is thinking, of beating the Kenyans, and winning medals at the Worlds."

This is probably why Sable wants to forget the CWG silver. India, though, is unlikely to.

Chhetri is AIFF men's 'Footballer-of-the-Year'

Manisha picks up a maiden honour in the women's category

Chhetri. • FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Manisha. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

National captain Sunil Chhetri was on Tuesday named the AIFF Men's 'Footballer-of-the-Year' for the seventh time while Manisha Kalyan was picked for her maiden honour in the women's category for the 2021-22 season.

Chhetri and Kalyan were nominated as the winners by their respective National team coaches Igor Stimac and Thomas Dennerby.

Chhetri was first named for the award in 2007. He then went on to win it in 2011, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018-19 seasons.

Manisha had earlier won the women's 'Emerging Footballer-of-the-Year' in the 2020-21 season.

Martina Thokchom and Vikram Partap Singh were named the 2021-22 women's and men's 'Emerging-Footballer-of-the-Year' respectively.

Crystal John was chosen 'Best Referee-of-the-Year' while the 'Best Assistant Referee-of-the-Year' was Ujjal Halder.

Hockey coach Reid sees red

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BIRMINGHAM

An angry Indian men's hockey team coach Graham Reid lashed out at his wards for their disastrous showing in the Commonwealth Games final against Australia.

"There is a thing called energy and I don't think we had that today," Reid told PTI after the match. "When you play Australia this can happen. But I'm disappointed we didn't play well at all. We let ourselves down and all the things we talked about we didn't do. It's disappointing."

Reid said, perhaps, the Indians were intimidated by the atmosphere.

And the curtains come down....

Colourful end: Fireworks light up the skyline as the Birmingham Commonwealth Games came to a grand close on Monday. For India A. Sharath Kamal and Nikhat Zareen did the honours of carrying the national flag during the marchpast. • PTI

LIVE TELECAST

Zimbabwe vs Bangladesh: 3rd ODI, FanCode, 12.45 p.m.
KSCA Maharaja T20: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & FanCode, 3 p.m. & 7 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Renuka Singh surges to reach career-best

DUBAI

Indian pacer Renuka Singh, the leading wicket-taker at the Commonwealth Games, reached a career-best ranking of 18 in the latest ICC T20 women's rankings released on Tuesday. The 11 scalps at the recently-concluded Birmingham Games helped Renuka jump 10 places. PTI

Manoj Prabhakar is Nepal head coach

NEW DELHI

Former India all-rounder Manoj Prabhakar has been appointed head coach of the Nepal cricket team. He succeeds P. Dassanayake, who stepped down in July. PTI

Need another Gurjit for penalty corner sequences: Marijne

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

Last year when the Indian women's hockey team finished fourth at the Tokyo Olympics, coach Sjoerd Marijne was as proud as the girls. It wasn't a surprise, therefore, that the former India coach's excitement at India's Commonwealth Games bronze medal could be felt all the way from the Netherlands.

"I am very, very happy with the bronze, defeating New Zealand. They deserved it and I feel they should have, in fact, won the match in regular time because they were so much better. But to concede in the end and come back from that mental setback to win in the shoot-out shows toughness," Marijne said.

The one big concern, both at the CWG and at the World Cup, was India's inability to convert penalty corners, but Marijne defended drag-flicker Gurjit Kaur.

"I think it is not fair to blame Gurjit. She is world-class, but it is getting more and more difficult to score from penalty corners for all teams.

"The runners are getting better and with the goalkeeper covering one angle and the runners the other, it leaves hardly any space to take the shot without getting dangerous," he countered.

The solution: develop another world-class drag-flicker. "It is important to get another Gurjit. We have been grooming Deep Grace Ekka, but she is not at the same level as Gurjit," he said.

Asked about India's chances at the Asian Games next year, Marijne is confident of the team going all the way.

Rousing welcome for Sable, Eldhose and Aboobacker

They achieved all that they had hoped for and more at the Birmingham Games

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

When Avinash Sable, Eldhose Paul and Abdulla Aboobacker departed for the twin – World Athletics Championship and Commonwealth Games – events, each went with a different target and a different dream.

For triple-jumpers Eldhose and Aboobacker, it was all about getting a personal best at what would be their debuts on the international stage. For Sable, who eats 3000m steeplechase national records for breakfast, it was all about winning a medal.

On Tuesday, they returned to the Sports Authority of India South Centre here – their training base in India – to a rousing welcome, after having achieved all they had hoped for and more.

"The goal was to do my personal best," said Eldhose. "If we do our personal best at such a big event, it gives you a very different feeling. There were no expectations of a medal. That in fact brings pressure. We did our personal bests and we got the medal."

Grand reception: Eldhose, Aboobacker and Sable at a welcome ceremony in Bengaluru on Tuesday. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Without a coach

That Eldhose and Aboobacker didn't have their National coach M. Harikrishnan by their side was tough. Yet, they made do with online coaching by Harikrishnan, often in the wee hours in India, and broke through the coveted 17m barrier to secure the nation's first-ever 1-2 finish in athletics at the CWG.

"Eldhose was ninth at the Worlds and I was 19th... in India we were top, but there we were 19th!" said Aboobacker. "It was my first international competition. I was all alone in Chula Vista (California). After the Worlds, I was very depressed. I had tried my best, but I didn't have the result to show. But my coach encouraged me throughout and we both leapt 17m."

The Chopra influence

The belief that carried them owes in larger measure to what Neeraj Chopra did at the Tokyo Games in 2020 – winning India's maiden track and field gold. "The thinking has changed," said Sable, who became the first non-Kenyan to win a steeplechase medal at the CWG in 24 years.

20 days to prove worth

"Earlier, it used to be like: 'we want to be known as Olympians'. Now we want to be known as Olympic medallists. After the disappointment at the Worlds (11th place), I told myself that I had 20 days to prove my worth.

"There is a general thinking that against such tough competition, the best you can do is a personal best. But my target was to beat the Kenyans and win a medal.

"The Kenyans generally bunch together, at the front, and they end up sweeping the medals. But there was a point during the race when they turned back and looked at me. That was it. I believed I could win."

Pandey's half-century steers Gulbarga Mystics home

Avinash's five-for in vain for Shivamogga Strikers; Mithun is Tigers' hero with a blistering knock

MAHARAJA TROPHY

CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Skipper Manish Pandey's power-packed half-century helped Gulbarga Mystics register a three-wicket win over Shivamogga Strikers on the third day of the Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20 tournament here on Tuesday.

Set a target of 176, Mystics crossed the finish line with three wickets and five balls to spare.

They got off to a decent start with openers Devdutt Padikkal (9) and Jeshwanth Acharya (30, 17b, 3x6). A. Rohan Patil (28, 20b, 5x4) batted freely to put on 26 runs with Pandey.

Captain's knock: Pandey led from the front for Mystics. • M.A. SRIRAM

Pandey (50, 36b, 2x4, 3x6), propelled the innings by executing some fierce pulls and square cuts off Avinash and off-spinner K. Gowtham. He added 32 for the with K.L. Shrijith (15) before departing with the score at 161 in 18 overs.

Needing 10 in seven balls, Ritesh Batkal (9 n.o, 1x6) scored a six off K.C. Cariappa over long-off. With four required in the last over, C.A. Karthik (22 n.o, 9b, 2x4, 1x6) scored a boundary off M.B. Darshan to seal the game. Avinash impressed with five for 40.

Opting to bat, Strikers posted a competitive total of 175 for eight in 20 overs with southpaw opener Rohan Kadam (53, 41b, 3x4, 2x6) and one-drop K.V. Siddarth (53, 51b, 4x4, 1x6) adding 108 for the second wicket in 87 balls.

In the second match, Hubli Tigers needing 137 runs to win in 16 overs (VJD method), scored 139/6 in 15.5 overs. Skipper A. Mithun's 51 n.o (22b, 2x4, 5x6) was the guiding force while, B.U. Shivakumar scored 30.

Earlier, Bengaluru Blasters put into bat, posted 119/5 in 16 overs, before rain halted play. Later its innings was closed at the same score. Skipper Mayank Agarwal top scored with 43 (38b, 4x4, 1x6).

The scores: Bengaluru Blasters 119/5 in 16 overs (rain halted play) (Mayank Agarwal 43, Suraj Ahuja 20, Saurabh Srivasthav 2/31) lost to Hubli Tigers (Revised target via VJD method - 137 in 16 overs) 139/6 in 15.5 overs (A. Mithun 51 n.o., B.U. Shivakumar 30, J. Suchith 2/21).

Shivamogga Strikers 175/8 in 20 overs (K.V. Siddarth 53, Rohan Kadam 53, K. Gowtham 23, C.A. Karthik 3/29, Vidwath Kaverappa 2/48) lost to Gulbarga Mystics 177/7 in 19.1 overs (Manish Pandey 50, Jeshwanth Acharya 30, A. Rohan Patil 28, C.A. Karthik 22 n.o, D. Avinash 5/40).

Former athlete Kamaraj passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Former International athlete P.V. Kamaraj passed away here on Monday, after a massive heart attack. He was 68 and is survived by wife and two sons.

He was part of the Indian 4x400m relay team that won bronze in the 1979 Asian Championships in Tokyo. As part of the Tamil Nadu team, Kamaraj won a host of medals in 400mH in inter-State meets and Open Nationals from 1977-80.

At the 1979 Hyderabad National Games, he won silver in 400mH.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Roots FC to compete in BDFA Super Division league

Roots Football Club will compete in the BDFA Super Division men's league this season, the club announced here on Tuesday. The squad, which consists of 21 players from Karnataka, will be coached by Srikanth Rajan. The club has been working in grassroot football in the city for the last 13 years.

Samarth slams unbeaten century

M.P. Samarth (142 n.o.) powered host REVA PUC-A past CMR PUC in the REVA University Independence Day pre-university T20 tournament.

The scores: Sheshadripuram Composite PUC 209/6 in 20 overs (Tejasvarma 56, Kiran 40) bt VVS Sardar Patel PUC 185/2 in 20 overs (P. Saikiran 108 n.o., N. Adithya 30 n.o.). REVA PUC-A 274/5 in 20 overs (M.P. Samarth 142 n.o., Vishnu Viran 72) bt CMR PUC 135/9 in 20 overs (Advaith Shyan 60).

Ethan nets winner

Ethan's early goal helped Vidyashilp Academy edge out St. Josephs's BHS 1-0 in the St. Joseph's Boys' High School Fr. Eric Vaz Memorial (under-14) inter-school hockey tournament at KSHA here.

The results:

Fr. Eric Vaz Memorial (Under-14) :Vidyashilp Academy 1 (Ethan 6) bt St Joseph's BHS 0.

Centenary Shield (U-17): Frank Anthony 2 (P. Arjun 28, 30) bt Greenwood High 1 (Nayan Gowda 14); Chinmaya Vidyalaya 1 (Mahendra 6) drew with SJBHS 1 (Bhavesh 39).